

REFUGEE POLICY AND LANGUAGE LEARNING IN PITTSBURGH, PA

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University of Pittsburgh, 2012

Nearly three million refugees have been resettled in the United States since 1975. As a population, they are subject to a number of impediments unique amongst English-language learners and under constant pressure to achieve economic self-sufficiency. Language learning is a crucial component of their successful adaptation to their new home. This thesis will show that no single, comprehensive language policy on refugee language-learning in the United States exists. Instead, policy is administered and shaped by a variety of institutions and policy makers at many different levels. Recognizing how refugees' lives are impacted by this spectrum of influences is critical to our understanding of their role as language-learners. Using government documents and ethnographic methods (e.g., Duff (2002) and Shohamy (2006)), this thesis will describe the United States' language policy jigsaw by looking at its manifestations at the federal, state, and local levels. The first part of this investigation involves an analysis of the refugee-related legislation and associated documents that constitute the superstructure of this ad-hoc policy. The second half takes a look at the consequences of this framework via an ethnographic case study of the refugees, social services providers and educators who serve them in Pittsburgh, PA. The ethnography is based primarily upon interviews and correspondence with 15 people: 5 with resettlement agencies (including religious and secular), 6 with NGOs (including a family support center and a literacy program provider), 2 with schools (one urban and one suburban) and 2 with refugees (Somali Bantu and Nepali-Bhutanese). We conclude that current resources are inadequately addressing refugees' language-learning needs in large part due to U.S. refugee policy's roots in foreign policy, USRAP's focus on self-sufficiency through employment, and the manner in which political power shapes policy.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

According to statistics released by the U.S. government, around 747,820 refugees have been resettled in the United States between the years 2000 and 2011 and nearly 3 million since 1975. These populations exist in a precarious transitional state under enormous pressure. First, they are driven from their country of origin and into countries that may view them with more suspicion than empathy. Once resettled, a process that may take decades, they have to find their bearings in an alien culture, often struggling with an interrupted education, language barriers, limited job prospects, and fractured social support networks. All the while, the clock is ticking on their federal benefits in a system that expects economic self-sufficiency on a limited time frame. Language learning is a crucial component of their successful adaptation to their new home.

However, refugees are burdened with a number of impediments that make them unique amongst English language-learners (ELLs) in the United States. They must deal with the negotiation of multiple, changing identities and behaviors that put them at odds with Western expectations and inhibit integration (Cheng, 1996; Duff, 2002; Masny & Ghahremani-Ghajar, 1999; Mickan et al., 2007). The pedagogical style these ELLs have experience with is often different from the education they encounter in the United States, forcing them to “re-learn how to learn” (Dooley, 2010; Woods, 2009). In addition, the context in which they are learning is quite dissimilar to that of their native-speaker peers. Background assumptions surrounding family literacy, learner L1 literacy and attitudes towards literacy in an ELL's home culture cannot be

made when it comes to refugee ELLs (Abu-Rabia 2001; Abu-Rabia 2005; Cummins 1983; Fennelly & Palasz 2003; Guglielmi 2008; Shany, Geva, & Melech-Feder 2010). For advocates and academics interested in understanding the language development of these learners, it is a worthwhile endeavor to carefully examine the plethora of variables at play to identify the elements that facilitate and inhibit these processes.

Over the course of their resettlement process, refugees encounter a range of laws that impact their lives in substantial ways. This paper will focus on one aspect of this legal framework, specifically those policies that shape the course of their language learning. The first part of our investigation involves a documentary analysis of the refugee-related legislation and associated documents that constitute the superstructure of the United States' refugee policy. The second half takes a look at the consequences of this framework via an ethnographic case study of the refugees, social services providers and educators who serve them in the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania.

1.1 LANGUAGE POLICY

Whenever one is concerned with an official set of rules for how a language is to look or be used, one is dealing with language policy. As a field, language policy saw its birth in the years following World War II in the form of “language planning” when a range of newly independent states were looking to foster unity and promote themselves as modernized nations (Spolsky, 2012). At the time, the primary concern was with various aspects of ‘planning’ or ‘management’ of a language, whether by modernizing its spelling, standardizing its grammar (*corpus planning*), or selecting a nation’s official language (*status planning*). The field has since expanded its scope

to include other less rigidly defined areas such as language policy in literacy and education (Liddicoat, 2007), minority language rights (May, 2012), and language-learning initiatives as matters of national security (Brecht & Rivers, 2012).

Shohamy (2006) outlines six mechanisms by which a nation's language policy is legally enforced: language laws, officiality, standardization, nationalization, language academies, and citizenship laws. However, language policy also concerns itself with the actual language practices of a speech community, and Shohamy argues that our definition of language policy ought to also include more informal mechanisms such as language education, language tests, language in public space, and the ideological postures that surround language use. This attitude greatly informs the present investigation, in that it looks at both instantiations of language policy in order to paint a comprehensive picture of refugees' language-learning landscape.

There is not much to consider in the United States insofar as official rules and regulations around language. At the state level, according to the American Civil Liberties Union of Florida, sixteen separate states have passed laws that declare English the official language of the state or restrict government support of non-English services. At the federal level, the country has no official language and legislation related to speakers of other languages is most often concerned with protecting non-English speakers *vis-à-vis* their rights as an American citizen. Two examples of this are in the context of amendments to the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which requires bilingual voting assistance to communities with a certain percentage of non-English speakers, or Executive Order 13166, which is aimed at providing Limited English Proficient citizens equal access to government services. A few large cities, including New York City, San Francisco, and Washington, D.C. have also instituted their own language access policies to ensure that new Americans have access to governmental literature (Bloemraad & de Graauw, 2012). A recent

exception would be the Plain Writing Act, passed in October of 2010, which requires federal agencies to use "clear Government communication that the public can understand and use" (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 2012).

Beyond the language proficiency element of the naturalization test, wherein one of the requirements for citizenship is the demonstration of an understanding of the English language, including an ability to read, write, and speak words in ordinary usage in the English language" (INA §312(a)(1)), very little is said about refugee and immigrant language learning on the federal level. Indeed, there is no language requirement for being accepted as a refugee within the United States. According to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services a refugee is defined only as someone located outside of the United States, who is of special humanitarian concern to the United States, demonstrates that they were persecuted or fear persecution due to race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group, is not firmly resettled in another country, and is otherwise admissible to the United States. When it comes to refugees, the legislative priority is more often placed upon economic self-sufficiency than on cultural or linguistic integration. Based on a review of the language used in institutional mission statements and extant legislation on the federal level, language support often falls by the wayside if it garners any mention at all. A handful of states, including New Jersey, Massachusetts, Maryland, Illinois, and Washington, do have executive orders that make immigrant and refugee integration, including language training, a priority (ISED Solutions, 2010), but this tends to be the exception rather than the rule.

Authority surrounding refugee issues is more often ceded to a constellation of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), with occasional influence from federal education legislation, in what has been characterized as "a loosely stitched patchwork" (Bloemraad & de

Graauw, 2012). The United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP), the collective name for the clutch of agencies responsible for resettlement, is comprised of three federal agencies, a handful of international institutions, and nine NGOs, sometimes called voluntary agencies (volags) or resettlement agencies. The federal agencies are concerned primarily with the macro-issues of resettlement and the disbursement of grants to other organizations. The national volags themselves disburse funds to a network of local affiliates who are tasked with providing a range of social services, only some of which involve language instruction. This is all to say that there is no single, comprehensive language policy regarding refugee language learning in the United States. Language policy is instead implemented and influenced by a variety of different organizations and policies at many different levels.

1.2 FOCUS OF THE PRESENT WORK

This thesis is divided into four sections. The first is a review of the foundations of the institution of refugee resettlement, including the international framework, the patterns of resettlement in the United States, and the legal evolution of the modern resettlement program. The second stage is a contextual description of USRAP, including an extensive description of the admissions process, a summary of extant problems, and a brief comparison with the resettlement programs of other nations. The third area presents the results of an ethnographic study of the refugee situation in Pittsburgh, consisting of documentary analysis and 12 interviews with individuals who interact with refugees and refugees themselves. The fourth stage attempts to synthesize all of our findings and provide recommendations for future advocates and policymakers.

2.0 FOUNDATIONS

2.1 INTERNATIONAL DEFINITION OF A REFUGEE

In its most basic formulation, refugee resettlement involves “the selection and transfer of refugees from a State in which they have sought protection¹ to a third State which has agreed to admit them” (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2011, p. 2). The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is the chief international organization concerned with refugees. Resettlement is considered to be one of the three durable (i.e., permanent) solutions appropriate for dealing with a refugee's situation. It is, however, only to be considered when the other two options of voluntary repatriation (return to the country of origin) and local integration (into the country of first asylum) are not feasible.

The foundational document of the institution of international refugee protection is the United Nations' 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The Convention was intended to create a framework to help deal with the populations displaced by World War II. The document established the first internationally recognized, standardized definition of a refugee. Namely, a person who:

As a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to well- founded

¹ Known as a country of first asylum.

fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.

Additionally, the Convention created a series of rights of refugees to be recognized by, and obligations to be fulfilled by, signatory nations. Central to these are “a number of fundamental principles, most notably non-discrimination, non-penalization and *non-refoulement*” (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2010, p. 3; italics in original). The Convention compels signatories to apply the provisions in the document without discrimination due to race, religion or country of origin. It also requires them to respect the right of asylum, even if the pursuit of said right results in a refugee entering a country illegally. *Refoulement* is the forceful expulsion of an asylum-seeker to their country of origin where they may face persecution, a concept anathema to the purposes of refugee protection. The Convention also obliged nations to guarantee refugees within their borders various rights, including access to courts, primary education, and work, the right to official identifying documentation *vis-à-vis* a refugee travel document, and the potential to eventually become a naturalized citizen. Signatory nations were expected to cooperate with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in its dual mission of “[providing] international protection for refugees; and ... [seeking] permanent solutions to the problem of refugees by assisting governments to facilitate their voluntary repatriation or their assimilation within new national communities ” (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2000, p. 22). The 1951 convention was later amended

by a 1967 Protocol to expand its definition of a refugee to remove its temporal and geographic limitations, thereby extending its coverage to include anyone fleeing persecution anywhere.

2.2 UNHCR PRECURSORS

Internationally, refugee resettlement was first addressed by the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA), an organization established in 1943 by the Allies to provide aid to areas devastated by the ongoing conflict of WWII. In the post-war years, repatriation became its primary focus. However, this became an increasingly contentious issue as the Eastern and Western bloc countries clashed regarding how to address individuals who did not wish to return to their country of origin. Eventually, the United States refused to extend the organization's mandate or to continue providing financial support, and UNRRA folded in 1947 (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2000, p. 16).

In 1946, its mantle was taken up by the International Refugee Organization (IRO), a non-permanent agency created by the newly formed United Nations. IRO was “the first international body to deal comprehensively with every aspect of the refugee issue” (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2000, p. 16). Similar to UNRRA, the IRO's aim was to deal with the populations displaced in the wake of World War II. While repatriation was the organization's initial goal, an increasing number of displaced persons were instead resettled into third-countries due to growing “valid objections” to repatriation, including “persecution, or fear of persecution, because of race, religion, nationality, or political opinions” (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2011, p. 47). Its role was later superseded by the UNHCR in 1951 and in early 1952, IRO's mandate expired.

2.3 INTERNATIONAL RESETTLEMENT UNDER UNHCR

Since its foundation, UNHCR has been continuously faced with waves of forced migration stemming from political turmoil worldwide. Notable examples include the Soviet invasion of Hungary in 1956, the expulsion of Asians from Uganda in 1972, the Chilean *coup d'état* in 1973, and the largest wave of forced migration to date that resulted from the fall of Saigon in 1975. Many people also fled their homes as a consequence of the overthrow of the Shah in Iran, during the prolonged Iran/Iraq war in the 1980's, and after the first Gulf War in 1991. The 1990's saw humanitarian resettlement efforts shift their focus to Eastern Europe in light of the conflicts in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1992-1993 and Kosovo in 1999. In more recent years, Sudanese youth in Kenya, the so-called "Lost Boys", Somali Bantu, Iraqis displaced by the U.S. invasion, and ethnic minorities from Burma and Bhutan have also seen large resettlement efforts. (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2011)

At present, there are 26 nations accepting refugees or in the process of establishing a resettlement program. Long-standing resettlement programs exist in Australia, Canada, Denmark, Finland, New Zealand, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, and the United States of America. Three of these nations, Australia, Canada and the United States, admit ninety-percent of the resettlement cases handled by UNHCR. Six nations have established resettlement programs since 2000: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Iceland, Ireland and the United Kingdom, and the number of programs continues to expand with Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, France, Germany, Hungary, Japan, Paraguay, Portugal, Spain, Romania and Uruguay all stating their intention to create a resettlement program since 2007 (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2012).

2.4 RESETTLEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

The United States of America has one of the longest running institutionalized resettlement programs and continues to admit a large percentage of the resettlement cases worldwide. In 2011, around 70% of all refugee cases handled by UNHCR were resettled in the United States 2007 (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, 2012). Prior to its systemization 1980, refugee resettlement in the United States was ad-hoc and instituted largely through targeted pieces of legislation drafted in reaction to specific instances of conflict and displacement. This is reflected in the resettlement numbers and is why mid-century refugees generally came from European nations, the majority of the refugee admissions in 1966 were from North America (i.e., Cuba), and most of the admissions in 1977 hailed from Asian nations (i.e., individuals fleeing from the conflicts in Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia).

Table 1. Refugee Admissions: June 1946 – Sept. 1978

FY	Africa	Asia	Europe	Other	S. America	N. America	Yearly Total
1945	15	416	39,802	17	24	50	40,324
1948	107	4,016	405,234	32	19	288	409,696
1953	406	16,333	171,829	65	43	486	189,162
1957	1,492	10,869	16,833	55	22	191	29,462
1958	1	12,266	40,608	23	9	57	52,964
1959	0	431	1,376	0	2	11	1,820
1960	3,091	795	15,893	1	1	2	19,783
1965	40	32,078	79,499	10	14	836	112,477
1966	0	1,041	7,551	5	885	361,128	370,610
1977	14	94,017	63	11	9	32	94,146
TOTALS	5,166	172,262	778,688	219	1,028	363,081	1,320,444

* Europe includes the U.S.S.R; Cuba is included within North America; Asia includes Israel and Palestine.

* Source: Moore, 1980

In some ways, early U.S. refugee policy served as an arm of the nation's Cold War-era foreign policy. Each migrant who settled in the United States after fleeing from a Communist-

dominated nation was a symbolic victory in the country's ideological struggle against the Soviet Union. Much of the early refugee legislation was targeted specifically at admitting individuals fleeing Communist nations outside of existing immigration restrictions.

U.S. refugee policy has been disparaged on these very grounds, with critics charging that the United States' acceptance of displaced persons was done more out of a desire to improve its image in on the international stage than for any special humanitarian concern (Kurzban, 1981; Loescher & Scanlan, 1986). While this may have changed since the expansion of franchise of resettlement without regard to country of origin, the impact of U.S. foreign policy on immigration law cannot be denied. Take, for instance, the codification and visa preference provided to the immigration category of “Amerasian”, defined by P.L 97-359 as an individual “fathered by a U.S. citizen after 1950 in Korea, Vietnam, Laos, Kampuchea, or Thailand”. One might also consider the inclusion of “Iraqis associated with the United States” (including “employees of the U.S. Government, a U.S. Government-funded contractor or grantee, and U.S. Media and NGOs working in Iraq” (U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, 2012, p. 10) as a population prioritized as being in need of resettlement.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that since the amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act in 1978 that wiped out the Hemispheric limits in favor of a worldwide admissions ceiling and the formalization of the resettlement process after the passage of the Refugee Act in 1980, the source of refugees coming to the United States has greatly diversified. The Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) reports that USRAP admits refugees of more than 69 nationalities from 92 countries (U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, 2012). Additionally, amongst all of the nations who accept refugees, the United States consistently resettles the largest number of displaced persons each

year. It has also anecdotally been reported that certain cities within the United States are even gaining a reputation within refugee camps as being particularly good places to be live (Ott, 2011).

In general, the patterns of resettlement in the United States since 1980 mirror world-wide trends, and it is easy to detect the impact of global conflicts on the resettlement numbers. Note, for example, the rise of migrants coming from Europe in the mid-90's as a result of the fighting in the Balkans or the precipitous drop in admissions in the years following the September 11th terrorist attacks as security measures were tightened.

Table 2. Refugee Admissions: FY 1975 – 2011

FY	Africa	East Asia	Eastern Europe	Soviet Union	Latin America	Near East & S. Asia	Yearly Total
1975	0	135,000	1,947	6,211	3,000	0	146,158
1976	0	15,000	1,756	7,450	3,000	0	27,206
1977	0	7,000	1,755	8,191	3,000	0	19,946
1978	0	20,574	2,245	10,688	3,000	0	36,507
1979	0	76,521	3,393	24,449	7,000	0	111,363
1980	955	163,799	5,025	28,444	6,662	2,231	207,116
1981	2,119	131,139	6,704	13,444	2,017	3,829	159,252
1982	3,412	73,755	11,109	2,760	580	6,480	98,096
1983	2,645	39,245	11,867	1,342	691	5,428	61,218
1984	2,749	51,978	10,096	721	150	4,699	70,393
1985	1,951	49,962	9,233	623	151	5,784	67,704
1986	1,322	45,482	8,503	799	131	5,909	62,146
1987	1,990	40,099	8,396	3,699	323	10,021	64,528
1988	1,593	35,371	7,510	20,411	2,497	8,368	75,750
1989	1,902	45,722	8,752	39,602	2,604	6,938	105,520
1990	3,453	51,598	6,094	50,628	2,305	4,979	119,057
1991	4,420	53,522	6,837	39,226	2,253	5,342	111,600
1992	5,470	51,899	2,915	61,397	3,065	6,903	131,649
1993	6,967	49,817	2,582	48,773	4,071	6,987	119,197
1994	5,860	43,564	7,707	43,854	6,156	5,840	112,981
1995	4,827	36,987	10,070	35,951	7,629	4,510	99,974
1996	7,604	19,321	12,145	29,816	3,550	3,967	76,403
1997	6,065	8,594	21,401	27,331	2,996	4,101	70,488
1998	6,887	10,854	30,842	23,557	1,627	3,313	77,080
1999	13,043	10,206	24,497	17,410	2,110	4,098	71,364
2000	17,531	4,561	22,561	15,103	3,232	10,129	73,117
2001	19,021	3,725	15,777	15,748	2,973	12,060	69,304
2002	2,548	3,525	5,439	9,963	1,933	3,702	27,110
2003	10,717	1,724	2,525	8,744	452	4,260	28,422
2004	29,125	8,079	489	8,765	3,556	2,854	52,868
2005	20,749	12,071	11,316	0	6,700	2,977	53,813
2006	18,182	5,659	10,456	-	3,264	3,718	41,279
2007	17,482	15,643	4,561	-	2,976	7,619	48,281
2008	8,935	19,489	2,343	-	4,277	25,147	60,191
2009	9,670	19,850	1,997	-	4,857	38,280	74,654
2010	13,305	17,716	1,526	-	4,982	35,782	73,311
2011	7,685	17,367	1,228	-	2,976	27,168	56,424
Regional Total	260,184	1,396,418	303,599	605,100	112,746	283,423	2,961,470

* Beginning in FY 2004, Eastern Europe and the Former Soviet Union were combined into a single category: Europe and Central Asia; **Sources:** PRM as reported in ORR Annual Report 2008; Bruno, 2012.

2.5 GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION OF RESETTLEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES

Once they have gone through the lengthy process of applying for resettlement (see section: 3.0), refugees are resettled throughout the United States though certain places are better than others. Where they end up hinges on decisions made in weekly meetings at the Refugee Processing Center in Arlington, Virginia. Such decisions are based on the biographical data collected by Overseas Processing Entities during initial processing interviews (see section 3.1), and include “information on family size, nationality, ethnicity, religion, and medical conditions” (Georgetown University Law Center, 2009, p.9) . According to 8 USC §1522(a)(2), these placement decisions are supposed to take into account the proportion of refugees compared with the local population (so that a refugee is not resettled into an area already “highly impacted” by an existing refugee population), local employment prospects and available housing, educational, and medical resources, the likelihood of a refugee becoming economically self-sufficient in the area, and the influence of possible secondary migration on the resettlement area.

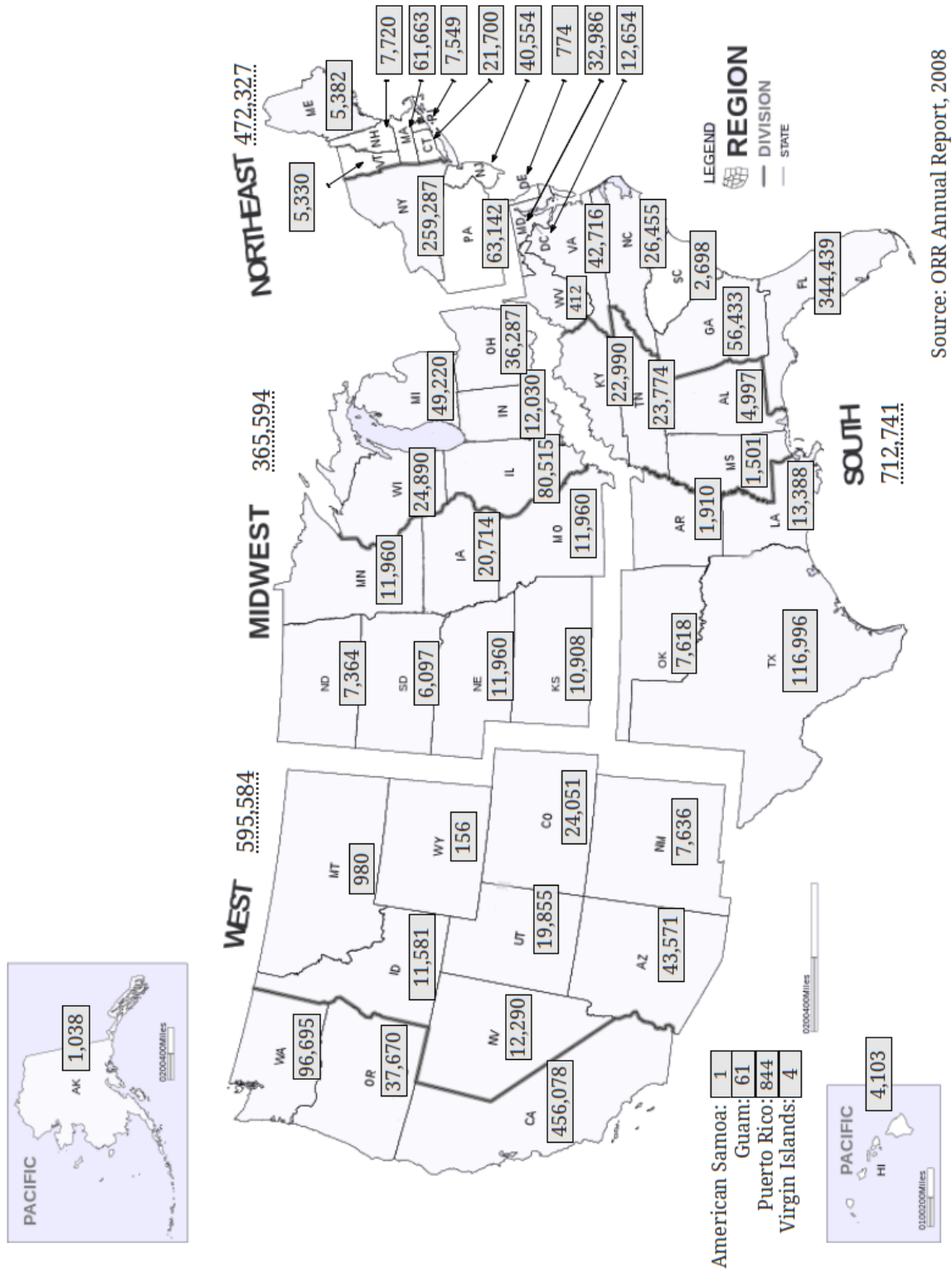
In general, this means that refugees are placed into areas with the infrastructure capable of supporting them; usually this means large cities. Easily accessible public transit, an established social service sector, and experienced volag staff are all factors that make a city more attractive for resettlement. This also means that once a city has an established population of refugees of a particular ethnic group, more are likely to follow. An existing community makes it easier for new arrivals quickly establish social support networks with others who share their culture and area NGO staff become attuned to issues unique to the population.

This tendency to resettle refugees in urban areas can be seen in the resettlement figures.

According to the PRM report proposing admissions for FY 2013, in FY 2011 the largest percentages of refugees were resettled in states with sizeable metropolitan areas: California, New York, Pennsylvania, Florida, Georgia, and Michigan (U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, 2012). Since 1983, the top five states receiving refugees through USRAP have been California, Florida, New York, Texas, and Washington. Conversely, the bottom five states receiving the least amount of refugees (not including U.S. Territories) are more rural: Wyoming, West Virginia, Delaware, Montana, and Alaska (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2011). Additionally, the Refugee Processing Center reports that for FY 2012, the top five cities receiving refugees were San Diego, CA; Houston, TX; Phoenix, AZ; Atlanta, GA; and Miami, FL (Refugee Processing Center, 2012).

Once placed in these cities, refugees receive institutional support from a variety of actors. The form this support has taken has changed over time, shaped by a series of legislative events that resulted ultimately in the USRAP's modern form.

Figure 1. Refugee arrivals by state of initial resettlement, 1983 – 2008

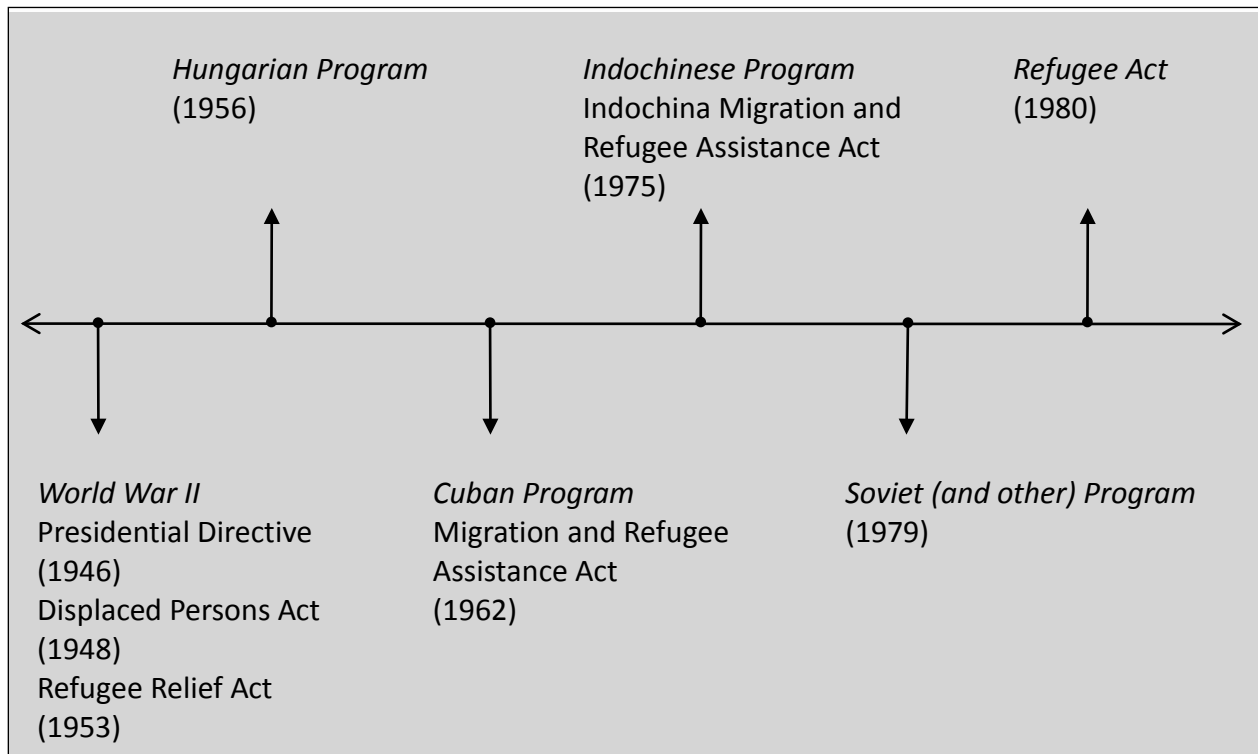


Source: ORR Annual Report, 2008

2.6 LEGISLATION AND POLICY ACTION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF USRAP

Though its origins lay in the years following WWII, the modern refugee resettlement program did not see its full institutional realization until the passage of the Refugee Act of 1980. During this interim period, the U.S. refugee policy evolved slowly by way of a chain of ad-hoc legislative actions. In general, these executive orders, bills, and financial appropriations established the legal precedent to admit a wider and wider range of refugees into the United States, but provided little financial support post-arrival. They were instead concerned with permitting refugees access to the country outside of existing immigration restrictions. Nevertheless, as the range of displaced populations permitted entry grew, so did the precedent for governmental financial support, culminating in the state of affairs today where refugees from around the globe are allowed entry, and provided with hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of support services annually once they arrive.

Figure 2. Major developments in refugee support prior to the Refugee Act of 1980



2.6.1 Early history

Early in its history, the United States had few restrictions on immigration. No distinction was made between individuals fleeing persecution and any other individual entering the country. This changed, however, beginning in 1875 as a series of bills placed an increasing number of restrictions on who was allowed into the country. Particularly noteworthy was the Chinese Exclusion Act of 1882 which prohibited the entry of Chinese nationals entirely, and the Immigration Act of 1917 which imposed a literacy test for immigrants older than 16 years and excluded anyone born in the “Asiatic Barred Zone”, essentially barring all of Asia except Japan

and the Philippines². This narrowing definition of what constituted an “acceptable” immigrant came to a head with the National Origins Quota Act in 1924. This act placed a 150,000 person annual ceiling on all immigration and established entry quotas based on the national origins of the American population in 1920³. Most of the refugee-related legislation that followed was drafted primarily to sidestep these restrictions.

2.6.2 Truman’s Presidential Directive

The first instance of governmental action on behalf of displaced populations came in the twilight of World War II. The war had torn Europe asunder and displaced thousands from their homes. In late 1945, President Truman issued a Presidential Directive to reestablish disrupted consular activities in Europe and expedite the issuance of visas to persons displaced by the war in an effort to provide haven to some of these individuals and facilitate their emigration into the United States. Visas granted under the directive were to adhere to existing quota laws.

In an illustration of the hesitance with which the federal government approached providing direct financial support for refugees, relatives or sponsoring humanitarian organizations were tasked with providing necessary travel funds and visa fees for individuals admitted under the directive’s authority, such that “the transportation of these immigrants ... [would] not cost the American taxpayers a single dollar”. It also was the first instance of the U.S. Government's long history of partnering with NGOs to provide post-resettlement support for refugees. The resultant program existed until superseded by the Displaced Persons Act of 1948.

² Japan had already voluntarily restricted emigration in 1907 and the Philippines were an American colony.

³ Individuals from countries within the Western hemisphere were not included in these restrictions.

2.6.3 Displaced Persons Act of 1948

Even with Truman's directive, the needs of those displaced in Europe far outstripped the ability of existing immigration pathways. In response, the Displaced Persons Act of 1948, the first piece of U.S. legislation addressing refugees, was passed. The act enabled people within specific areas of Europe to enter the United States, bypassing existing quota restrictions. Beyond the extraordinary circumstances surrounding their emigration, these immigrants were treated as any other immigrants to the United States with no special governmental support afforded to them after their arrival although in 1952 President Truman did authorize the use of \$4.3 million for a limited assistance program to help provide care in the camps and facilitate overseas travel.

2.6.4 Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952

The next significant piece of immigration legislation was the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1952, which consolidated existing immigration laws into a single statute. While in its original incarnation it did not specifically address refugee admissions, it did incorporate language that created a precedent for the admission of immigrants fleeing untenable situations in their countries of origin and signal a growing awareness of the need for legislative frameworks within immigration law to deal with such situations.

2.6.5 Refugee Relief Act of 1953

The Refugee Relief Act of 1953 (P.L. 83-203) was the first act to create an admissions pathway for refugees entirely outside of the quotas established in 1924. It was enacted both to

continue to address the movement of populations after WWII (including Dutch, Chinese, and Palestinian persons) and, more specifically, to facilitate the immigration of individuals from Eastern Bloc nations. It authorized the granting of 250,000 special non-quota immigrant visas to “refugees”, “escapees”, and “German expellees” allotted according to their country of asylum. It also included a provision to allow up to 5,000 individuals who had entered the country prior to July 1st, 1953 to adjust their immigration status to permanent resident if they were unable to return to their country of origin due to a fear of persecution.

The program was administered by the Bureau of Security and Consular Affairs within the Department of State and provided the first in a series of legal definitions for the term *refugee* used by American policy. Section 2(a) defined a refugee as:

any person in a country which is neither Communist nor Communist-dominated, who because of persecution, fear of persecution, natural calamity or military operations is out of his usual place of abode and unable to return thereto, who has not been firmly resettled, and who is in urgent need of assistance for the essentials of life or for transportation.

Escapee was defined as an individual who fled from a Communist, Communist-dominated, or Communist-occupied nation who could not return due to a fear of persecution.

German expellee was defined as a refugee of German ethnic origin who was removed from or fled from their country of origin and came to temporarily reside within certain areas of Germany or Austria.

Such immigrants were required to have the sponsorship of American citizens to ensure they would be able to find suitable employment and suitable housing upon their arrival and were “not become public charges”. Additionally, background checks were required to determine their

eligibility according to existing immigration law (*vis-à-vis* their “character, reputation, mental and physical health, history, and eligibility under [the] Act” (§11(a)). It also allocated financial backing execute its mission, and the U.S. Treasury was authorized to make loans “no greater than \$5 million” to both public and private agencies to fund transportation for immigrants from their ports of entry to their place of resettlement. The act was set to expire at the end of 1956, three years after its passing.

2.6.6 Hungarian Refugee Program

Following the failed revolution in Hungary against its Soviet-aligned government in 1956, many Hungarians fled the country into neighboring Austria. President Eisenhower declared that the United States would grant 6,500 visas available under the Refugee Relief Act of 1953 and admit a further 15,000 Hungarian refugees under the parole provision of the Immigration and Nationality Act. This is the first instance of the parole provision being used to assist a specific group of refugees. Under the auspices of the Mutual Security Act of 1954, he also authorized the use of funds to establish a program of asylum to protect said refugees and facilitate their emigration (Eisenhower, 1956). This resulted in the opening of a processing center at Camp Kilmer in the state of New Jersey. Provision of resettlement assistance was left to voluntary agencies; federal monies were to be used only for processing, and transportation to and from the camp (Holman, 1996). As this status was intended to be temporary and did not allow the Hungarians to become permanent residents under existing law, a later act was passed to allow refugees who had been in the United States for two years to make this adjustment.

2.6.7 Refugee-Escapee Act

The Refugee-Escapee Act of September 11, 1957 (71 Stat. 639) was the next step in the development of modern U.S. refugee policy. It instituted a number of amendments to the INA, authorized the disbursement of 18,656 surplus non-quota visas originally allocated by the Refugee Relief Act of 1953, and annulled the “oversubscription” of immigrant quotas that had resulted from the Displaced Persons Act. The Refugee-Escapee Act was significant in terms of the development of refugee policy for two primary reasons. First, it established the basis of the statutory definition of a “refugee-escapee” for the next 23 years (Holman, 1996). Section 15(c)(1) of the Act defined a refugee-escapee as:

any alien who, because of persecution or fear of persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinion has fled or shall flee (A) from any Communist, Communist-dominated, or Communist-occupied area, or (B) from any country with the general area of the Middle East, and who cannot return to such area, or to such country, on account of race, religion, or political opinion.

Section 15(c)(2) goes on to clarify that the “general area of the Middle East” constitutes “the area between and including (1) Libya on the west, (2) Turkey on the north, (3) Pakistan on the east, and (4) Saudi Arabia and Ethiopia on the south”. Second, it was the origin of the notion that refugee admissions were to be handled separately from conventional immigrant admissions as it provided provisions that authorized the granting of non-quota admissions to certain immigrants who had been previously ineligible (Holman, 1996).

2.6.8 Fair Share Law of 1960

The Fair Share Law of 1960 (P. L. 86-648, 74 Stat. 504) was enacted in part to help deal with the displaced persons still residing in camps around Europe as a result of the WWII by creating a temporary program to enable such individuals to legally enter the United States until its expiry in 1962. The Act authorized the Attorney General to parole up to 500 refugee-escapees (as defined by the Refugee-Escapee Act) utilizing the authority granted by section 212(d)(5) of the INA provided that they could acquire sponsorship by a voluntary agency to help them attain economic self-sufficiency. Moore (1980) notes that this was one of the first instances of the use of the parole authority to admit groups of aliens (rather than individuals) *with* congressional sanction and was essentially the precursor to the conditional entry provision introduced by the 1965 amendments to the INA. She also notes that it was designed as an ongoing legal procedure by which refugees could gain entry to the United States, regardless of their country of origin and was thereby more comprehensive than previous piecemeal refugee legislation implemented in reaction to particular emergencies.

2.6.9 Cuban Refugee Program

By the end of 1960, a large number of Cuban refugees had fled from Castro's Cuba into the United States. Unlike previous refugee situations, this was the first time the United States had acted as a country of first asylum and as the first major population of refugees arriving without official sponsorship, the Cubans were entering the country without the assurance of employment or housing upon arrival (Holman, 1996). In response, President Eisenhower established a Cuban Refugee Emergency Center in Miami, Florida initially funded by the

President's contingency fund under the Mutual Security Act and later by the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962. This was the first time the U.S. Government worked in any significant capacity with volags to provide refugee resettlement services (Comptroller General of the United States, 1977). While not the direct result of legislation, the program was significant for the wide array of federally supported programs it instituted to assist the Cuban migrants. Such programs included resettlement, health, training, and educational services (including English-language instruction). This is the first instance of the federal government providing funding for domestic assistance programs for refugees post-arrival. Previously, the task of helping new arrivals adapt to the United States was left up to private institutions. This support generally took the form of contracts with volags or subsidies paid to government programs provided by the state of Florida, Dade County, and the City of Miami (Mitchell, 1962; Holman, 1996). Most of the Cubans served by the center were admitted into the country under the parole provision of the INA.

2.6.10 Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962

The next significant development in U.S. Refugee policy was the Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1962 (P.L. 87-510, 76 Stat. 121). Its stated purpose was “to enable the United States to participate in the assistance rendered to certain migrants and refugees” and was one of the first legislative acts to provide a financial commitment to refugee social services beyond simple transportation to the United States.

Domestically, the Act had a series of provisions authorizing appropriations “as may be necessary from time to time” for a number of different purposes. In many ways, these appropriations foreshadowed a number of elements of the modern refugee resettlement process.

Funds were authorized “for assistance to or in behalf of refugees designated by the President ... when the President determines that such assistance will contribute to the defense, or to the security, or to the foreign policy interests of the United States” (§2(b)(2)), in much the same way that Priority Designations identify the groups eligible for access to USRAP. Financial support was also authorized to public agencies providing health, educational, and employment training services to substantial numbers of refugees and for resettlement-related transportation. It should be noted that for the purposes of this Act, section 2(b)(3) defined a refugee as:

aliens who (A) because of persecution or fear of persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinion fled from a nation or area of the *Western Hemisphere*; [italics added] (B) cannot return thereto because of fear of persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinion; and (C) are in urgent need of assistance for the essentials of life

In this case the “essentials of life” are presumed to be shelter, food, and water as a distinction is made in the language of the Act between funding for the provision of those needs and funding for the aforementioned health, educational, and employment training services. No set amount was set aside for these appropriations, though up to \$10 million per fiscal year was authorized to be transferred from the funds made available under the Mutual Security Act of 1954, and the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 in cases of “unexpected urgent need”. The Migration and Refugee Assistance Act was later amended by the Indochina Migration and Refugee Assistance Act of 1975 to include individuals fleeing from Cambodia and Vietnam in the legislation's definition of a refugee and to appropriate \$455 million to execute the services authorized by the 1962 Act in support of refugees from Cambodia and Vietnam. A year later, it

was amended again to include refugees from Laos. These funds were to expire two years hence, on September 30, 1977.

2.6.11 Indochinese Refugee Program

This \$455 million went towards establishing the Indochinese Refugee Assistance Program (IRAP). Following the events of 1975, thousands of refugees fled to neighboring countries and were eventually resettled into other countries, primarily the United States. Four processing centers were established on American soil to process background checks and provide temporary housing while arrangements were made elsewhere by contracted volags. IRAP provided funds for financial assistance to refugees, health services, social services (including language and employment training), and supplemental assistance to impacted school districts (Holman, 1996). An appropriation of \$405 million was set aside for evacuation, temporary care, and resettlement costs. Another \$100 million was appropriated to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare for educational purposes. Additionally, \$15 million went to elementary and secondary education grants for providing aide to the children of incoming refugees and \$5 million went to adult education grants (PL 94-23; Comptroller General of the United States, 1977). Other federal projects included a nationwide toll-free hotline to provide assistance in the refugees first languages and a newspaper intended to “provide refugees with information in their own language about programs and services in both the public and provide sector ... [and] help them adjust to life in the United states and become productive members of American society” (Comptroller General of the United States, 1977, p. 28).

2.6.12 1965 Amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act

The 1965 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act (P.L. 89 236; 79 Stat. 911), also known as the Hart-Cellar Act, were characterized by historian Russel O. Wright as “the most sweeping changes in liberalizing immigration law in the nation's history prior to the 21st century” (Wright, 2008, p. 106). They abolished the previous national origins quota system that had been in place since the 1920's and established a series of visa preferences. Most significant for the development of refugee policy was the “conditional entry” provision included in section 203(a)(7) as an admission preference category.

Conditional entry (INA §203(a)(7)) was one of seven different immigrant visa preference categories established by the Act. They established an annual ceiling of 170,000 persons per year from the Eastern Hemisphere, 20,000 from each country. Six percent of these visas were intended for the conditional entry of refugees. This admission ceiling was expanded twice, once in 1976 to include a separate immigration ceiling for immigrants from the Western Hemisphere and again in 1978 to abolish the individual Hemisphere ceilings and create a worldwide limit, 17,400 of which were to be reserved for the conditional entry of refugees. However, an individual had to meet several criteria to qualify for conditional entry:

That (I) because of persecution or fear of persecution on account of race, religion, or political opinion they have fled (I) from any Communist or Communist-dominated country or area, or (II) from any country within the general area of the Middle East, and (ii) are unable or unwilling to return to such country or area on account of race, religion, or political opinion, and (iii) are not nationals of the countries or areas in which their application for conditional entry is made; or (B) that they are persons

uprooted by catastrophic natural calamity as defined by the President who are unable to return to their usual place of abode. (Quoted in Moore, 1980)

The conditional entry provision was repealed with the passage of the Refugee Act of 1980.

2.6.13 Soviet and other refugee program

In 1979, immediately preceding the passage of the Refugee Act of 1980, a new domestic refugee assistance program was established for those refugees not covered by the Cuban or Indochinese refugee programs. Funding for this program, administered by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare, came from the Foreign Relations Authorization Act (P.L. 95-426). It provided dollar-for-dollar matching funding for volags to provide follow-up resettlement assistance, such as English-language training and employment counseling, after the initial resettlement period. It was, in essence, the predecessor to the ORR programs initiated by the Refugee Act.

2.6.14 Refugee admission from 1965 - 1980

After the 1965 amendments to the Immigration and Nationality Act and prior to passage of the Refugee Act of 1980, five legal means had been established by which an individual fleeing persecution could use to gain entry into the United States: conditional entry (see: section 2.6.12), parole, suspended deportation, asylum, and specially targeted legislation. *Parole* was a procedure established by a provision of the INA provision (§212(d)(5)) wherein an alien could be temporarily admitted into the United States “in emergencies or for reasons deemed strictly in the

public interest” (Moore, 1980, p. 8). While originally intended to be used on a case by case basis, the status of parole was to repeatedly be used as legal authority for the admission of refugees until the formalization of the process provided by the Refugee Act of 1980. Suspended deportation occurred in situations when an alien had a reasonable fear of persecution upon their return. Asylum seekers are generally under the same kind of persecution as refugees, however, asylum seekers are already within the United States whereas refugees seek refugee status from outside of the country. Special legislation was passed to admit refugees in cases where the existing provisions that allowed refugees to establish legal (or permanent) residence in the country were outstripped by the actual number of displaced persons in need of refuge. This was done in the case of Cuban, Indochinese, and Hungarian refugees (see sections 2.6.6; 2.6.9; 2.6.11).

2.6.15 Refugee Act of 1980

The most comprehensive piece of legislation to address refugee issues in the United States is the Refugee Act of 1980, Title IV of the INA. It established the federal refugee resettlement program, detailed in section 3.0, and the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) within the Department of Health and Human Services. The goals of the act were to create a system to help refugee integrate as quickly as possible, aided by a variety of private and public institutions. The objective of ORR is to provide employment training and job placement, facilitate English-language training such that newly arrived refugees can find employment as soon as possible, and provide assistance in such a way that encourages self-sufficiency (and discourages dependence). They are also to help provide newly arrived refugees with basic needs such as food, clothing, shelter, and transportation to job interviews and job training. Language-

training is almost always mentioned in the context of allowing refugees to be “effectively resettled as quickly as possible” or as a means of facilitating employment; that is to say that language-learning is seen by the ORR and USRAP primarily as a way of getting them off of government dependence as quickly as possible.

2.6.16 Other legislation

2.6.16.1 Bilingual Education Act

From 1968 until 2002, the Bilingual Education Act (BEA) was a federal grant program to help schools provide instruction to students who were English Language Learners. It was passed as part of the wave of civil rights legislation that came about in the late 1960’s and sought to bring federal enforcement of civil rights legislation to education. It was the first piece of federal legislation for minority language speakers and “served as a remedy against discrimination of students who did not speak English” (Bloemraad & de Graauw, 2011, p. 20). BEA provided grants for instructional services (including funding for program enhancement and implementation), support services (including support for research and technical assistance), and professional development (including financial support for teacher training and graduate fellowships). In its final year, it provided \$296 million to around 1,000 projects. It funded programs with a range of different approaches to language-teaching from *bilingual education*, which utilizes the students' native language in instruction, to *immersion* programs with little emphasis on the native language, to *submersion* programs which offer no accommodations to the students' native language. BEA was replaced in 2002 by the English Language Acquisition Act (ELAA). (Osorio-O'Dear, 2001; Bloemraad & de Graauw, 2011)

2.6.16.2 English Language Acquisition Act

ELAA is Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Passed in January of 2002, NCLB is a “landmark educational reform that aims to reduce the achievement gap among U.S. primary and secondary schools through strict testing requirements and penalties for states and schools that fail to meet performance requirements” (Bloemraad & de Graauw, 2011 p. 21). In contrast with BEA, ELAA makes no mention of bilingual education. Its stated goals are

to help ensure that children who are limited English proficient, including immigrant children and youth, attain English proficiency, develop high levels of academic attainment in English, and meet the same challenging State academic content and student academic achievement standards as all children are expected to meet (NCLB §3102(1))

in addition to providing schools with resources to develop and improve their language instruction through a series of grants. These grants are allotted to states according to how many ELL children the state contains in proportion to the total number of ELL children nationwide provided that the state education agencies first produce a plan describing how such funds would be utilized to improve instruction and raise the proficiency levels of ELLs in their system.

2.6.16.3 Executive Order 13166

Executive Order 13166, signed by President Bill Clinton on August 11, 2000, tasked each federal agency with creating a plan to improve access to their services so as not to "discriminate on the basis of national origin in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964". This meant improving access to federally conducted and assisted programs and activities for individuals with limited English proficiency. One consequence of this is that any institution that

receives federal funds, such as hospitals accepting Medicare, must have a plan to increase access to Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals.

2.6.16.4 Citizenship application

While the American citizenship test focuses heavily on civics, with the primary objectives of “[encouraging] citizenship applicants to learn and identify with the basic values of the United States, and [excluding] applicants who do not demonstrate those values” (Hargreaves, 2010, p. 104), language is also involved in the process. To apply for citizenship in the United States, applicants must be over 18 years of age and a permanent resident. The application costs \$595, with an \$80 biometric information processing fee when applicable. The test itself involves demonstrating a basic knowledge of the history, principles and form of the United States government as well as the ability to read, write, and speak basic English⁴. It is administered orally in an interview format and is designed to evaluate the applicant’s reading, writing, listening, and speaking ability in a single assessment. This evaluation consists of 10 civics questions from a possible pool of 100, along with three reading items and three writing items. To pass, an applicant must answer 6 of 10 civics questions correctly, and one of three reading and writing questions correctly. (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services)

⁴ Exemptions are provided for individuals of a certain age who have been in the country for an extended period of time and to those individuals with permanent mental or physical impairments that render them unable to complete the task.

3.0 UNITED STATES REFUGEE ADMISSIONS SYSTEM

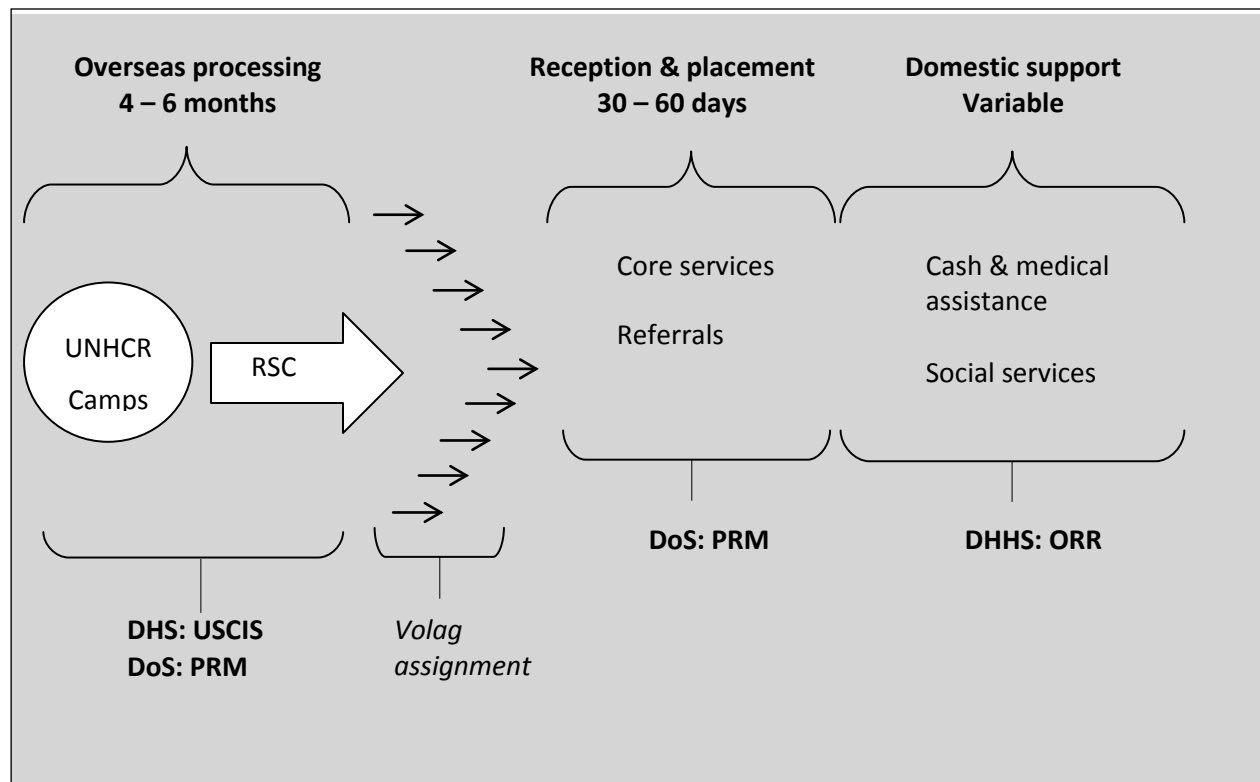
As mentioned in section 2.6.14, modern United States refugee policy was established with the passing of the Refugee Act of 1980 (P.L. 96-212), which amended the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA 8 U.S.C. §§1101 *et seq.*). The stated objective of this Act was “to provide a permanent and systematic procedure for the admission to this country of refugees of special humanitarian concern to the United States, and to provide comprehensive and uniform provisions for the effective resettlement and absorption of those refugees who are admitted”. In a review of U.S. refugee policy drafted concurrently with the passing of this legislation, a congressional researcher also noted that the legislation was aimed at unifying the ad-hoc approach the nation had taken towards refugee policy that had existed since World War II (Moore, 1980). In its present state, the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) consists of three federal bureaus, nine⁵ domestic non-governmental organizations (variously referred to as resettlement or voluntary agencies (*volags*)⁶) with around 350 local affiliates nationwide, and a handful of international agencies (Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration). Taken broadly, the

⁵ Some sources report the existence of ten volags, but PRM’s website refers to nine.

⁶ At present, the nine volags contracted with the federal government to provide resettlement and domestic-support services are: Church World Service, the Ethiopian Community Development Council, Episcopal Migration Ministries, the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society, the International Rescue Committee, the US Committee for Refugees and Immigrants, Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, and the World Relief Corporation.

refugee resettlement process consists of three stages: overseas processing, domestic reception and placement, and integration and self-sufficiency.

Figure 3. Summary of USRAP



3.1 OVERSEAS PROCESSING

Before overseas processing can even begin, the Administration must first make a formal determination on the number of refugees to be admitted into the country in a given fiscal year. In the first stage in this process, PRM consults with agencies at all levels of government who deal with refugees as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, volags and other advocacy organizations, to determine the incoming refugees' resettlement needs. Next, the Office of Admissions in the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration coordinates with DHS and

ORR to draft a report for the President who then presents the findings to the Judiciary Committees of the House and the Senate. According to INA §207(e), this report must include:

- (1) A description of the nature of the refugee situation
- (2) A description of the number and regional allocation of the refugees to be admitted and an analysis of conditions within the countries from which they came
- (3) A description of the proposed plans for their movement and resettlement and the estimated cost of their movement and resettlement
- (4) An analysis of the anticipated social, economic, and demographic impact of their admission to the United States
- (5) A description of the extent to which other countries will admit and assist in the resettlement of such refugees
- (6) An analysis of the impact of the participation of the United States in the resettlement of such refugees on the foreign policy interests of the United States
- (7) Such additional information as may be appropriate or requested by members of Congress.

After receiving this report, Cabinet-level representatives of the Administration meet with members of the Senate and House Judiciary Committees to discuss the extant refugee situation and why the proposed refugee admissions are within the national interest. After these consultations are complete, the Administration determines the worldwide ceiling and regional allocations for refugee admissions in the coming fiscal year (U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, 2012; U.S. Department of State). These numbers are then used by the seven Resettlement Support Centers (RSC) throughout the globe to

execute their mission.

Funded by PRM, RSCs are managed by international and nongovernmental organizations to assist with the processing of refugee applications (U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, 2012). A refugee does not automatically qualify for entry into the United States but first must pass through a vetting process in order to verify their status as a refugee and otherwise eligible to enter the United States. Staff conduct pre-screening interviews with prospective refugees in order to prepare their cases prior to submission to United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) agents. Once finalized and submitted, their cases enter the adjudication process (Bruno, 2012) and USCIS agents make an official determination as to whether an individual qualifies for refugee status.

To be eligible for resettlement to the United States, a refugee must meet four criteria; they must be of special humanitarian concern to the United States, meet the definition of a refugee (as established by the INA), not be firmly resettled in a third country, and be otherwise admissible to the United States (Government of the United States of America, 2011).

3.1.1 Of special humanitarian concern

Those categories of refugees considered of “special humanitarian concern to the United States” are determined at the aforementioned consultations between the Administration and the Congress concurrently with admission ceilings. At present, there are three case “Priorities.” Priority 1 refugees are individuals referred to the program by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), a U.S. embassy, or a specially trained NGO. Priority 1 is open to any nationality. Priority 2 cases are made up of “groups of special concern” identified by

the Department of State. An ORR annual report notes that a Priority 2 categorization “generally applies to refugees with relatives residing in the U.S., refugees whose status as refugees has occurred as a result of their association with the U.S., and refugees who have a close tie to the U.S. because of education here or employment by the U.S. government ” (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2011, p. 4). The Priority 2 category is only open to individuals with predefined countries of origin. For example, the Priority 2 groups which have been identified for the Fiscal Year 2012 are: religious minorities hailing from the former Soviet Union; Cubans; Iraqis associated with the United States; ethnic minorities from Burma in camps in Thailand; ethnic minorities from Burma in camps in Malaysia; Bhutanese in Nepal; and Iranian religious minorities. Priority 2 populations may also be defined during the course of a year if an emergency situation arises that warrants resettlement. Priority 3 cases involve family reunification (individuals who have family already within the United States who were previously admitted as refugees or granted asylum). Priority 3 is open only to individuals of specific nationalities. Priority 3 admission was suspended in 2008 due to indications that high rates of fraud were occurring in certain RSC locations (Bruno, 2012; U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services , 2012) The Proposed Refugee Admissions report for FY 2013 states that Priority 3 processing will resume in FY 2013 with new measures to combat fraudulent familial claims. When available, Priority 3 processing is only available in certain countries. PRM notes that although labeled “priorities”, “assignment to a certain priority does not establish precedence in the order in which cases will be processed ” (U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, 2012, p. 6).

3.1.2 Meet the definition of a refugee

As presently amended, section 101(a)(42) of the INA defines a refugee as:

any person who is outside any country of such person's nationality or, in the case of a person having no nationality, is outside any country in which such person last habitually resided, and who is unable or unwilling to return to, and is unable or unwilling to avail himself or herself of the protection of, that country because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.

Also included in this definition are those aforementioned groups identified as a special humanitarian concern by the Administration. Excluded from this definition is “any person who ordered, incited, assisted, or otherwise participated in the persecution of any person on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.”

3.1.3 Not firmly settled in a third country

Having legal status within a third country (i.e., neither the individual's country of origin nor their country of first asylum) or another status such that an individual enjoys the “rights and privileges ... ordinarily available to others in the [third] country” constitutes being firmly settled (8 CFR 208.15) and disqualifies an individual from being resettled in the United States. This is primarily because the purpose of resettlement is to deliver individuals from untenable, temporary situations that result from flight from one's country of origin. If an individual demonstrates signs of integration into a third country, they do not require the assistance of USRAP to resolve their situation.

3.1.4 Otherwise admissible to the United States

Section 212(s) of the Immigration and Nationality Act identifies those categories of individuals who are ineligible for admission to the United States in any immigration situation. An individual may be denied admission on health-related grounds, criminal grounds, or security grounds. Health-related issues include being determined to have certain communicable diseases or to suffer from a physical or mental disorder that may pose a threat to others. Criminal grounds include being convicted of certain crimes, excepting very minor crimes, purely political crimes and those crimes committed as a minor. Security grounds include individuals who are associated with or plan to engage in activities of terrorism or espionage, having membership in a Communist or totalitarian party, and having engaged in Nazi persecution or genocide.

DHS/USCIS agents evaluate each individual application for refugee status based on these four factors. Beginning in FY 2006, authority for these vetting procedures was delegated to a newly established Refugee Corps dedicated to and specializing in performing these background checks (U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, 2012). During this process, a face-to-face interview is conducted with potential refugees. Refugees are asked about their experiences in their country of origin and may submit documentation to corroborate their claims or, failing that, eyewitness testimony (Government of the United States of America, 2011). Also part of this vetting procedure is a background security check, wherein their name and biometric information (i.e., fingerprints) are reviewed by DHS/USCIS for security purposes (U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, 2012).

Once determined to be eligible for entry into the United States, medical screenings are

conducted to evaluate an individual's admissibility on health-related grounds and administer certain vaccines as needed. Each refugee also requires a “sponsorship assurance” from a U.S. resettlement agency that commits to providing post-arrival assistance and making arrangements for arrival into the country with one of their local affiliates (U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, 2012)..

In addition to the above vetting procedures, RSCs also conduct one-to-five day pre-departure cultural orientation classes to prepare refugees for resettlement in the United States. According to the Cultural Orientation Resource Center, a non-profit organization that produces materials for refugees and service providers, topics covered in these classes include pre-departure processing, the role of the resettlement agency, housing, employment, transportation, education, health, money management, rights and responsibilities, cultural adjustment, and travel (Cultural Orientation Resource Center). The goal of these classes are to prepare the refugees to arrive in their new homes “with a realistic view of what their new lives will be like, what services are available to them, and what their responsibilities will be” (Government of the United States of America , 2011, p. 7). Some groups are shown video presentations that feature the resettlement experiences of members of the same ethnic group already in the United States. Also distributed to every family prior to departure is a resettlement guidebook titled *Welcome to the United States*. This guidebook is printed in 17 languages and covers many of the topics touched upon in the cultural orientation classes. Additionally, a *Welcome to the United States* companion video is available that reinforces the points in the handbook. It is also available in 17 languages.

Once approved for resettlement into the United States, refugees are referred to the International Organization for Migration (IOM) to be flown to the United States. IOM is an international, inter-governmental organization which, according to their web site, “works to help

ensure the orderly and humane management of migration, to promote international cooperation on migration issues, to assist in the search for practical solutions to migration problems and to provide humanitarian assistance to migrants in need, including refugees and internally displaced people.” They provide interest-free loans for the cost of their transportation, which are expected to be repaid by the refugees within 46 months (Bruno, 2012; U.S. Department of State, n.d.b).

3.2 RECEPTION AND PLACEMENT

Upon arrival in the United States, displaced persons exit the overseas processing phase of their resettlement and enter into the domestic reception and placement (R&P) period. Social services provided during this phase are provided by voluntary agencies and their affiliates and are funded by a program of grants from PRM called *reception and placement cooperative agreements*. R&P services focus on meeting the refugees' immediate needs and establishing them within the United States. They are provided within the first 30 – 90 days after a refugee's arrival (i.e., during the reception and placement period). According to the Proposed Refugee Admissions document, R&P services include initial sponsorship (to enable refugees to enter the country), pre-arrival resettlement planning, reception upon arrival at the airport, basic needs support (housing, furnishings, food, and clothing) for at least 30 days, community and cultural orientation, development and implementation of an initial resettlement plan, and “assistance with access” to health, employment, education, and other services as needed.

Funding for these R&P services come from DOS/PRM grants as well as cash and in-kind donations to the volag affiliates. These grants are administered in direct proportion to the number of individuals resettled by the agencies. Prior to January 2010, the per-capita R&P grant was

\$900, but this was doubled at the start of that year to \$1,800 per refugee. An associated press release cited the decrease in value of \$900 since its inception as a rationale for the grant increase as well as the insufficiency of present public and charitable resources to address the needs of refugees during the initial resettlement period (Office of the Spokesman, 2010). In FY 2012, the grant amount was increased again to \$1,850 (U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, 2012).

3.3 INTEGRATION AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

The next phase of resettlement begins after the R&P period ends. The programs during this period are generally intended to promote economic self-sufficiency and cultural integration into American society post-arrival. Funding for these programs originates from the ORR and is granted to state resettlement programs and local volags to address particular needs. Specifically, the INA outlines four requirements of these assistance programs. They are to ...

- (i) make available sufficient resources for employment training and placement in order to achieve economic self-sufficiency among refugees as quickly as possible,
- (ii) provide refugees with the opportunity to acquire sufficient English language training to enable them to become effectively resettled as quickly as possible,
- (iii) insure that cash assistance is made available to refugees in such a manner as not to discourage their economic self-sufficiency ... and
- (iv) insure that women have the same opportunities as men to participate in training and instruction. (INA §412(a)(1)(A))

ORR assistance takes three forms: cash and medical assistance (sometimes individually called refugee medical assistance (RMA) and refugee cash assistance (RCA)), social services, and targeted assistance.

RMA and RCA are the primary means by which ORR provides assistance to refugees and they constitute the largest categorical expenditure of the agency⁷. Refugees who are eligible to receive benefits for general public assistance programs such as Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI) are encouraged to do so. However, some refugees meet the income requirements for these programs but are categorically ineligible for them. Such individuals are then eligible to receive RCA and RMA. According to ORR's website, refugees may apply for RCA and RMA within eight months after arrival and are eligible to receive such benefits for up to eight months. These benefits are to be equivalent to the amount the refugees would receive under the public assistance program were they otherwise eligible ((CFR §400.45(f)(2)). Receiving RCA or RMA is predicated upon the refugee's registration with a sponsoring agency (generally a volag affiliate) presently providing employment services, the refugee's participation in social service programs providing job or language training, and the refugee's acceptance of appropriate job offers (Bruno, 2011).

Funding social service programs is the second way that ORR promotes the integration of newly arrived refugees. Under INA §412(c), ORR is authorized to fund for programs designed ...

- (i) to assist refugees in obtaining the skills which are necessary for economic self-sufficiency, including projects for job training, employment services, day care, professional refresher training, and other recertification services;

⁷ For further discussion on the ORR budget allocations and language-support, see Appendix D.

(ii) to provide training in English where necessary (regardless of whether the refugees are employed or receiving cash or other assistance); and

(iii) to provide where specific needs have been shown and recognized by the Director, health (including mental health) services, social services, educational and other services.

The Code of Federal Regulations (§400.154) further defines what constitutes an acceptable program *vis-à-vis* employability services. Such services include: employment services, employability assessment services, on the job training, English language instruction, vocational training, skill recertification, day care for children, transportation, translation and interpretation services, and case management services. States are also authorized to use ORR monies to provide information and referral services, outreach services, social adjustment services, citizen and naturalization preparation services in addition to the following services when they are not related to participation in employability services: day care for children, transportation, translation and interpretation services, and case management services.

Social service funding is provided to states via formula and discretionary grants. Formula grants are allocated based on the number of refugee arrivals to the state within the last two years. Programs supported by Social Service grants are available to refugees who have been in the United States for less than five years. Discretionary grants are awarded to programs within eight categories: Preferred Communities, Services for Unanticipated Arrivals, Ethnic Community Self-Help Organizations, Microenterprise development, Individual Development Accounts, Technical Assistance, Refugee Agriculture Partnership, and Healthy Marriage. These programs are available to refugees who have been in the United States for more than five years. (Bruno, 2012)

The final way the ORR provides post-resettlement assistance to refugees is through targeted assistance grants. Targeted assistance funding is similar to social services funding, but is

designed to provide funds to areas in need of *additional* support “because of factors such as unusually large refugee populations (including secondary migration), high refugee concentrations, and high use of public assistance by refugees, there exists and can be demonstrated a specific need for supplementation of available resources for services to refugees” (INA §412(c)(2)(A)). They are intended to be used to “primarily for employability services designed to enable refugees to obtain jobs with less than one year’s participation in the targeted assistance program in order to achieve economic self-sufficiency as soon as possible” (CFR §400.313) and in a way that does not replace existing programs. Such programs must be designed to target, primarily, those refugees still reliant upon government programs to meet their needs. The eligibility requirements and scope of targeted assistance services are the same as the general social service funding (sans transportation reimbursement). Targeted assistance grants are provided through both formula and discretionary grants. Formula grants are given to states on behalf of eligible (i.e., “highly impacted”) counties based on the number of recent refugee arrivals. Prior to FY2010, funding eligibility was based on arrivals in the preceding five years, but in FY2010 it was modified to instead be based on the number of arrivals in the past two years. Ninety-percent of targeted assistance is allocated this way; the rest is awarded through competitive discretionary grants (Bruno, 2011).

How these three forms of assistance are administered varies from state to state. There are four different programs by which ORR assistance is administered: state-administered programs, Public/Private Partnerships, a Voluntary Agency Matching Grant program, and/or a Wilson/Fish program. In a state-administered program, ORR reimburses states “for the full costs of their refugee cash assistance and refugee medical assistance programs” (Bruno, 2011, p. 12). In a Public/Private Partnership, a state has the option of jointly maintaining the RCA program with

local resettlement agencies while the RMA program remains state-administered.⁸ A Matching Grant program is another alternative to state-administered RCA/RMA programs. With these programs, volags provide assistance to enable refugees to achieve self-sufficiency without turning to public assistance. Volags must provide one dollar for every two dollars given by ORR. Wilson/Fish programs, so called due to the amendment that created them, are intended to allow public and private non-profit organizations to develop alternatives to state-administered refugee assistance programs in states that have withdrawn or are withdrawing from the resettlement program.⁹

3.4 LEGAL STATUS AFTER ARRIVAL

Refugees are legally able to work upon arrival in the United States. After a year, they are required to apply for an adjustment of their immigration status to become a lawful permanent resident, commonly called a Green Card. Five years post-arrival, they are eligible to apply for citizenship. (Government of the United States of America, 2011)

3.5 EXTANT PROBLEMS

The USRAP is incredibly successful in that it delivers a significant number of displaced

⁸ Such programs exist in Maryland, Minnesota, Oklahoma, Oregon, and Texas.

⁹ Wilson/Fish programs exist in 12 states (Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Massachusetts, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota, Tennessee, and Vermont) and one county (San Diego County, CA).

persons into the United States from untenable situations. Indeed, its humanitarian bent may be its greatest strength in that, as PRM stated in the forward to their 2013 Proposed Refugee Admissions document, “traditionally, the USRAP offers resettlement to refugees regardless of their location, national origin, health status, occupational skills, or level of educational attainment” (ii). Nevertheless, bringing such a diversity of people into the country creates its own set of problems and challenges. Providing the services necessary to support these people once resettled is a complex task, and a number of different reports and papers have identified a number of problems and limitations with the existing system.

Issues that arise repeatedly in the literature include a focus on quick employment and a consequential insufficient focus on education and language learning, a lack of adequate funding, the creation of a “lottery effect” in providing resettlement services, a one-size-fits all approach towards assistance, and an inability to cope with issues created by widespread secondary migration¹⁰. A common thread throughout these studies is the trouble surrounding language acquisition. Ability with the English language enables refugees to interact with larger society and is a major facilitator towards cultural integration (ISED Solutions, 2010) and economic self-sufficiency (Halpern, 2008) and increasing support for language learning is often amongst the recommendations (Abandoned upon arrival, 2010; Brick et al., 2010; Georgetown Law, 2009). Unfortunately, the named problems often inhibit a refugee's quest for English competence

¹⁰ Secondary migration is a phenomenon where refugees move away from their area of initial resettlement. This is problematic because local volag affiliates are only funded to provide services to those refugees resettled within their area. Therefore, refugees lose the support they are entitled to in their area of initial resettlement and receive limited or interrupted support in their new location.

3.5.1 Conflicting policy goals

A report commissioned by the International Rescue Committee has suggested that the root of many of these issues lies in the somewhat contradictory policy goals of the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) and the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). As discussed in sections 3.2 and 3.3, PRM handles the resettlement and initial reception of refugees while ORR administers domestic support services post-resettlement. As PRM exists under the auspices of the Department of State, its primary goal is providing humanitarian aid within a foreign policy orientation. ORR is a part of the Department of Health and Human Services and approaches the issue of resettlement from a domestic policy perspective. Where the issue arises is that the most vulnerable, and therefore the most in need of resettlement, are rarely the ones most likely to easily integrate into the workforce or society-at-large (Brick et al., 2010). Indeed, handling this incongruity and ensuring that the individuals resettled are properly equipped to integrate with the new culture may be *the* challenge when it comes to refugee resettlement.

What integration means in this context depends on who you ask and is a contentious issue even within the field of Refugee Policy (Ager & Strang, 2008). The Integration Working Group, convened at the behest of ORR, defined it as “a dynamic, multidirectional process in which newcomers and the receiving communities intentionally work together, based on a shared commitment to acceptance and justice, to create a secure, welcoming, vibrant, and cohesive society” (ISED Solutions, 2010, p. 5)¹¹. In their report, “Building an Americanization Movement for the Twenty-first Century”, the Task Force on New Americans, an interagency initiative

¹¹ The report notes that the Working group’s definition was not, however, adopted as an official definition by ORR.

spurred on by President George H. W. Bush¹², concerned itself with political integration. They characterized it as something that occurs when immigrants and citizens from other cultures come to adopt the unifying elements of American political doctrine, namely: the embrace of the principles of American democracy, an identification with U.S. history, and the ability to communicate in English (U.S. Department of Homeland Security, 2008). Nevertheless, Bloemraad and de Graauw argue that there is no overarching national integration policy or definition of “social integration” in the United States, resulting in a *laissez-faire* approach to integration they describe as “a loosely-stitched patchwork” of federal, state, and municipal initiatives (2011; Schmidt, 2007).

For its part, ORR's primary stated aim is to assist refugees to “become self-sufficient and integrated members of American society” (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2011, 1). The Refugee Act explicitly states that its goals are “to provide for the effective resettlement of refugees and to assist them to achieve economic self-sufficiency as quickly as possible” (INA §411.1). This is a common theme (and source of problems) in the literature. The favored means by which USRAP encourages integration is through quick employment as a pathway to economic self-sufficiency. On its web site, PRM claims: “based on years of experience, the U.S. refugee resettlement program has found that people learn English and begin to function comfortably much faster if they start work soon after arrival.” For the purposes of ORR, self-sufficiency is defined in the Code of Federal Regulations¹³ as a condition when a refugee is “earning a total family income at a level that enables a family unit to support itself without receipt of a cash assistance grant”. There exists a tension, however, between the desire to work

¹² Executive Order 13404 of June 7, 2006.

¹³ 45 CFR §400.2

and the need to acquire the language.

3.5.2 Focus on quick employment

A report on refugee integration commissioned by ORR found that while learning English is the most important factor in societal integration, the need to work often inhibits their ability to learn, thereby delaying integration (ISED Solutions, 2010). The more pressing need of financial stability before USRAP benefits run out often trumps their low proficiency with the language. In a report commissioned by the International Rescue Committee, the authors note the pressures created by the need to find refugees employment within the first six months post-arrival mean that “refugees lack time to become acclimated to their new surroundings and consequently find themselves in jobs that are inappropriate for their skill set, and often do not have access to the supportive services that could improve their long-term outcomes” (11). This pressure can apply even to younger refugees. A study on the resettlement of the Burmese Karen to the United States found that many Karen youths became frustrated with their lack of progress and support in mainstream schools and dropped out of High School to work alongside their parents in factory jobs (Kenny & Lockwood-Kenny, 2011).

The IRC report goes on to note that the focus on quick-employment comes at the detriment of any kind of recertification or training, thereby preventing refugees from finding employment appropriate to their prior work experience. This issue of refugees inability to find work suitable for their level of training is another frequently cited issue. In her study on Bosnia refugees, Ives (2007) found that “restrictive government policies regarding foreign qualifications and language instruction in resettlement contribute to refugees being funneled into low-wage jobs or the public welfare system” (54). A similar problem was identified in studies on the post-

resettlement situations of Iraqi refugees (Georgetown University Law Center, 2009; IRC Commission on Iraqi Refugees, 2009; U.S. Government Accountability Office, 2010).

3.5.3 Lottery effect

Another issue mentioned in these reports is the existence of a “lottery effect” wherein the services available to refugees vary drastically depending on the volag responsible for their case and the city in which they are placed (Brick et al., 2010; Farrel et al., 2008; Kenny & Lockwood-Kenny, 2011). Some examples of the uneven distribution of services include access to (both public and private) transportation, and the levels of support provided by general public assistance programs such as Temporary Aid to Needy Families (TANF) and Supplementary Nutrition Assistance (food stamps) which vary by state. Additionally, some agencies have the capacity to better provide specialized services for clients with needs such as single mothers, or people dealing with emotional trauma (Brick et al., 2010). Unfortunately, given the incredible diversity of situations and challenges posed by incoming refugees not every agency is equipped to handle their needs. The result is a “one-size-fits-all” style of assistance that does not always appropriately address the specialized needs of some of the refugees.

This variable distribution of services is one of the factors that serves as an impetus for secondary migration, or “state shopping”, wherein refugees move to a new location often based on the economic opportunities and state benefits available (Kenny & Lockwood-Kenny, 2011; Ott, 2011). The USRAP is also unable to deal with the challenges that arise due to secondary migration. Refugees are resettled in areas judged to be capable of affording them the support they need (see section 2.5). Unfortunately, when refugees move, their benefits do not move with them, and USRAP does not have a way to easily track them. As a result, their issues, such as

psychological trauma suffered as a result of their displacement, may go unaddressed (Georgetown Law, 2009; Brick et al., 2010; Kenny & Lockwood-Kenny, 2011; Ott, 2011).

3.5.4 Future directions

Since its formal establishment in 1980, USRAP has not had a formal, comprehensive evaluation or experienced substantial restructuring, though that may be changing within the next decade. At the time of the writing of this document, a bill¹⁴ has been introduced into the House by Minnesota Congressmen Keith Ellison to improve pre- and post-arrival processing of refugees. It would, among other things, begin workforce and English-language training before departure and mandate an annual adjustment of R&P grant amounts based on inflation and cost-of living. (Editorial board, 2012; Ellison, 2012) Additionally, in 2010 it was reported that the Obama Administration initiated a system wide review of refugee resettlement being led by the National Security Council. Little is known about the review nor when the information it produces will be made publically available (Bruno, 2011).

3.6 LANGUAGE-SUPPORT IN OTHER RESETTLEMENT PROGRAMS

Given its foundational nature in the integration process, refugee language-learning is an important factor in resettlement. However, the role it plays in the 26 operational resettlement programs varies. A number of the newly established programs, including Argentina, Paraguay,

¹⁴ H.R.6460 - Strengthening Refugee Resettlement Act

and Uruguay, have side-stepped the issue of language-support entirely by resettling only Spanish-speaking individuals. Amongst the remainder, comparisons can be made in terms of the role language plays in eligibility considerations, orientation procedures, and post-arrival support.¹⁵

Table 3. Summary of introductory support provided by established resettlement programs

<i>Country</i>	<i>Language support</i>	<i>Financial support</i>
Australia	510-hour language program	Up to 12 months
Canada	Government funded programs available	Up to 12 months
Denmark	Three year mandatory introduction program	Concurrent with introduction program
Finland	Included as part of three-year introduction plan	Concurrent with introduction plan
Netherlands	At least 500 hours of language training	Access to social security allowance prior to finding employment
New Zealand	Part of six-week orientation program	Concurrent with orientation program
Norway	Introduction program consisting of 600 hours of language and cultural training	NOK 158,432 annual economic benefit concurrent with introduction program
Sweden	Two-year, individual introduction program that consists of language training, employment services	Concurrent with introduction program
United States	Available within local communities	One-time grant of \$1,100 for basic needs, supplemented by sponsoring agency

¹⁵ Information from this section is drawn from the appendices of the UNHCR Resettlement Handbook. See bibliography for full citations.

3.6.1 Eligibility considerations

While most resettlement programs hold those criteria established by the United Nation's 1951 Convention Related to the Status of Refugees and its associated 1967 Protocol as the baseline standard for considering whether a refugee is eligible for resettlement, a few nations also include language-learning potential as prerequisite for admission. Canada mandates that “refugee applicants must show potential to become self-sufficient and to successfully establish in Canada within a 3 to 5 year time frame”(Government of Canada, 2011, 3). Their potential to learn English or French (the country's two official languages) is one of the factors considered when making this determination. Denmark has even more stringent guidelines when it comes to language ability. Illiterate refugees are disqualified “as a general rule”, and having learned additional languages is seen as an advantage when weighing their application “due to a reasonable assumption that they are motivated for learning Danish”. It is also noted that knowledge of a language “spoken by professionals” in Denmark is considered a plus as it will ease their transition by enabling communication with resettlement service providers. As noted in section 3.1, language plays no role in the eligibility considers of USRAP.

3.6.2 Orientation

Most established settlement programs provide some kind of pre-departure orientation for refugees still in their country of first asylum in order to prepare them for resettlement. Topics covered generally include an overview of the geography, culture and history of the country of resettlement, the refugee’s rights and responsibilities as a potential citizen, and a primer on economic issues such as employment and the cost of living. These orientation courses are

generally given over the course of one to five days. Some of the smaller programs, such as Portugal's and Paraguay's, provide only an information booklet and potentially an informational video to brief refugees. Only Finland, Denmark, and the Netherlands include a formal introduction to their national languages in the course of their orientations. The Danish program involves ten language lessons while the Dutch and Finnish programs include "an introduction" and "a few phrases" of their national languages respectively. For its part, the United States supplies a guidebook and orientation video, produced in 17 different languages, and provides cultural orientation courses that last from one to five days, depending on the processing center. USRAP does not include language-instruction in its orientation procedures at present. However, in FY 2011 PRM piloted 60-hour English as a Second Language courses at Resettlement Support Centers in Kenya, Thailand, and Nepal (Church World Service, 2012; U.S. Department of State, Homeland Security, and Health and Human Services, 2012) for possible inclusion into the standard resettlement process.

3.6.3 Post-arrival support

Language-support post-arrival is vital in its ability to enable refugees to find success in their new homes. Most resettlement programs provide support for language learning to some degree, though the length of the programs and whether or not they are compulsory varies from country to country.

New Zealand, the Czech Republic, and Ireland are exceptional in that they provide an "integration rest-stop" for refugees on the way towards permanent resettlement. During their first six weeks in New Zealand, refugees reside in a designated refugee resettlement center where medical check-ups, cultural training, and language courses are provided. Afterwards, an NGO

called English Language Partners is funded to provide English-language courses. Individuals resettled in the Czech Republic spend their first six months in the Integration Asylum Center where they receive 400 hours of language training. Group arrivals in Ireland spend their first eight to twelve weeks in a reception center where they receive a cultural orientation and language training program. After this period, they are entitled to up to 20 hours per week for the first year after arrival which may be extended in “exceptional circumstances”.

Australia, Denmark, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Sweden, and Iceland provide more extensive language programs. Australia provides 100 to 400 hours of language courses (dependent upon the refugee's age) in addition to 200 hours of work-related language training. Refugees living in Denmark must participate in a three-year mandatory integration program which involves both cultural orientation and language courses. This program is financed by the government and includes 30 hours per week of instruction. Similarly, refugees in Finland may receive three years of language courses, during which time they will receive an “integration allowance” while they are unemployed. Norway has a two-year introduction program that provides 600 hours of programming, primarily language-training during which time refugees receive a subsidy for attendance. Sweden also has a two-year introduction period during which refugees may receive income support and language-training. Iceland provides free language training during a refugee's first year of residence, and language training is part of the Romanian integration program which is free and lasts for a year. In the Netherlands municipalities must provide at least 500 hours of Dutch per refugee in order to guarantee a minimum level of proficiency in the language. However unlike the previously mentioned programs, refugees must pay for these courses though there are loans available. Canada also makes reference to the availability of free language courses funded by the government.

3.7 SUMMARY

Bringing refugees from their country of first asylum to the United States is a complex procedure that involves many institutional actors. Once here, they are provided with a range of support services dedicated to providing them with the means to establish themselves as independent individuals. Unfortunately, language learning is not the highest priority in these programs, and it remains a struggle for refugees to integrate into larger American society. Amongst the nations of the world with resettlement programs, the United States resettles the most refugees, but provides some of the most limited domestic support for language learning. The local consequences of USRAP's structure and refugee policy more generally will be explored further in the following section as this thesis turns its attention to the situation in Pittsburgh.

4.0 CASE STUDY OF POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN PITTSBURGH, PA

4.1 RESOURCES AND METHODOLOGY

Thus far this thesis has looked at the institution of refugee resettlement through the lens of the associated official documentation. It was primarily an outsider, top-down analysis of refugee policy in the United States. The following section is intended to produce a more insider, bottom-up perspective of the gears and pulleys that constitute the machinery of resettlement. An ethnographic study, conducted by speaking with those individuals most intimately familiar with the system, was determined to be the best way to gain such an intimate perspective and produce a comprehensive picture of the strengths and weaknesses of the United States' language policy as it manifests on the local level.

An ethnography was chosen as the best compliment to the documentary review contained in earlier sections because ethnographies are, by design, more capable of providing the sociological details than other methods of investigation miss. Ethnographies are a mainstay of qualitative research because they are able to provide a description of “the practice and beliefs of cultures ... a narrative that describes richly and in great detail the daily life of the community as well as the cultural meanings and beliefs the participants attach to their activities, events, and behaviors” (Dörnyei, 2007, p. 130; Watson-Gegeo, 1988). Such techniques have been utilized within the field of linguistics to investigate classroom discourse and school learning (Duff,

2002), attitudes and perceptions surrounding L1-use in schools as a means of identity construction (Hatoss & Sheely, 2009), cultural differences and literacy in a school environment (Masny & Ghahremani-Ghajar, 1999; Mickan et al., 2007), and the larger sociological contexts and issues surrounding language education (Watson-Gegeo, 1988). Ethnographic interviews provide more detail about the operation of a program than an “outward facing” annual report, and allow for more depth by way of follow-up questions. Interviews also enable the researcher to identify patterns not evident at the policy-level.

Language policy finds life through the social practices of those individuals who enact its mandates and thusly the present ethnographic study is based on interviews with 15 individuals: five with resettlement agencies (including religious and secular), six with NGOs (including a family support center, two literacy program providers, and an afterschool tutoring program), two with schools (one urban and one suburban) and two with refugees themselves (Somali Bantu and Nepali-Bhutanese). The intention was to speak with individuals who come into contact with USRAP in all its local incarnations. Participants included five program or site directors and around ten hours of interview data were collected. Participants were interviewed with the assurance of individual anonymity in the hopes that they would feel free to reveal any problems with current policy or share criticisms of their own organizations.

Table 4. Agencies targeted

Resettlement Agencies
Catholic Charities (CC)
Jewish Family and Children's Service (JFCS)
Northern Area Multi-Service Center (NAMS)
Social service agencies
Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council (GPLC)
Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU)
SHIM Family Support Center (SHIM: FSC)
Educational organizations
Pittsburgh Public School District (PPS)
AIU contract-teachers
Keep it Real (KIR)
Language learners
Somali Bantu (SB)
Nepali-Bhutanese (NB)

Table 5. Contacts

<i>Formal recorded interviews</i>	
Catholic Charities (CC)	Diana, Bethany
Jewish Family and Children's Service (JFCS)	Leah
Northern Area Multi-Service Center (NAMS)	Nasser
AIU contract-teacher (AIU)	Martha
Pittsburgh Public Schools (PPS)	Benjamin
Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council: Downtown Family Literacy Center (GPLC)	Gail
South Hills Interfaith Ministries: Family Support Center (SHIM: FSC)	Lindsey
Somali Bantu (SB)	Fuad
Nepali-Bhutanese (NB)	Govinda
<i>Less formal interviews or email correspondence</i>	
Keep it Real (KIR)	Imran
Catholic Charities (former) (CC)	Kristen
Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU)	Sue
Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council: Downtown Center (GPLC)	Anna
Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council: Whitehall Place Family Literacy Center (GPLC)	Nancy

**Names given are pseudonymous.*

The objective of the interviews was to shed light on the ways that federal, state, and local policies were facilitating refugees' language learning, and how they were inhibiting it. Interviewees were gathered through email solicitation of refugee-centric or associated organizations, as well as through personal contacts. The battery of questions included 31 open-ended items, which were expanded upon as necessary to address issues particular to the interviewee's purview (see: Appendices B and C). Distinct protocols were prepared for agency staff and learners, but both questionnaires were centered on the same topics. Protocols were designed with the following research question in mind:

Q: How does the United States Refugee Admissions Program impact refugees' language learning?

Specifically, how does it help or hinder their language learning, and what resources are available to assist in this process. The questionnaires were divided into six sections. The first was concerned with descriptive details about the individual's agency and how their mission was executed. Section two was concerned with resources and from where the organization draws its funding. Section three was on policy intersections and how legislation facilitates or hinders their work. Sections four and five asked about the challenges and successes their organization has seen, respectively. Section six asked about the refugee populations they served. Interviews ranged from 30 minutes to a little more than an hour and were recorded for later review.

4.2 THE CITY OF PITTSBURGH

Pittsburgh is a mid-size city located within Allegheny County in southwest Pennsylvania. It is one of the two highest populated counties in the state, with a population of 1,223,348, 6.8% of whom reported speaking a language other than English in the home. The city itself has a population of 305,704, 9.8% of whom speak a language other than English at home. The county is primarily White, with 80.5% reported as White, non-Hispanic, but significantly less so within city-limits, with the same statistic at 64.8% (US Census Bureau, 2011a; 2011b). Due to secondary migration, it is difficult to estimate the total number of resettled refugees residing in the area. However, the county has seen a gradual increase in resettlement numbers in recent years, peaking in 2009. Most these individuals and families are on the periphery of the city proper within the surrounding boroughs.

Table 6. Refugees settled in Allegheny County, by population: 2003-2012

	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	<i>Total</i>
Burma	-	3	34	23	100	158	84	16	16	9	443
Somalia	10	147	37	20	16	12	4	-	-	-	246
Russia	7	2	118	35	35	1	-	-	-	-	198
Bhutan	-	-	-	-	-	52	263	145	424	334	1218
Iraq	-	-	-	-	-	15	88	26	11	23	163
Other*	92	28	7	58	59	13	39	14	18	11	339
Total	109	180	196	136	210	251	478	201	469	377	2607

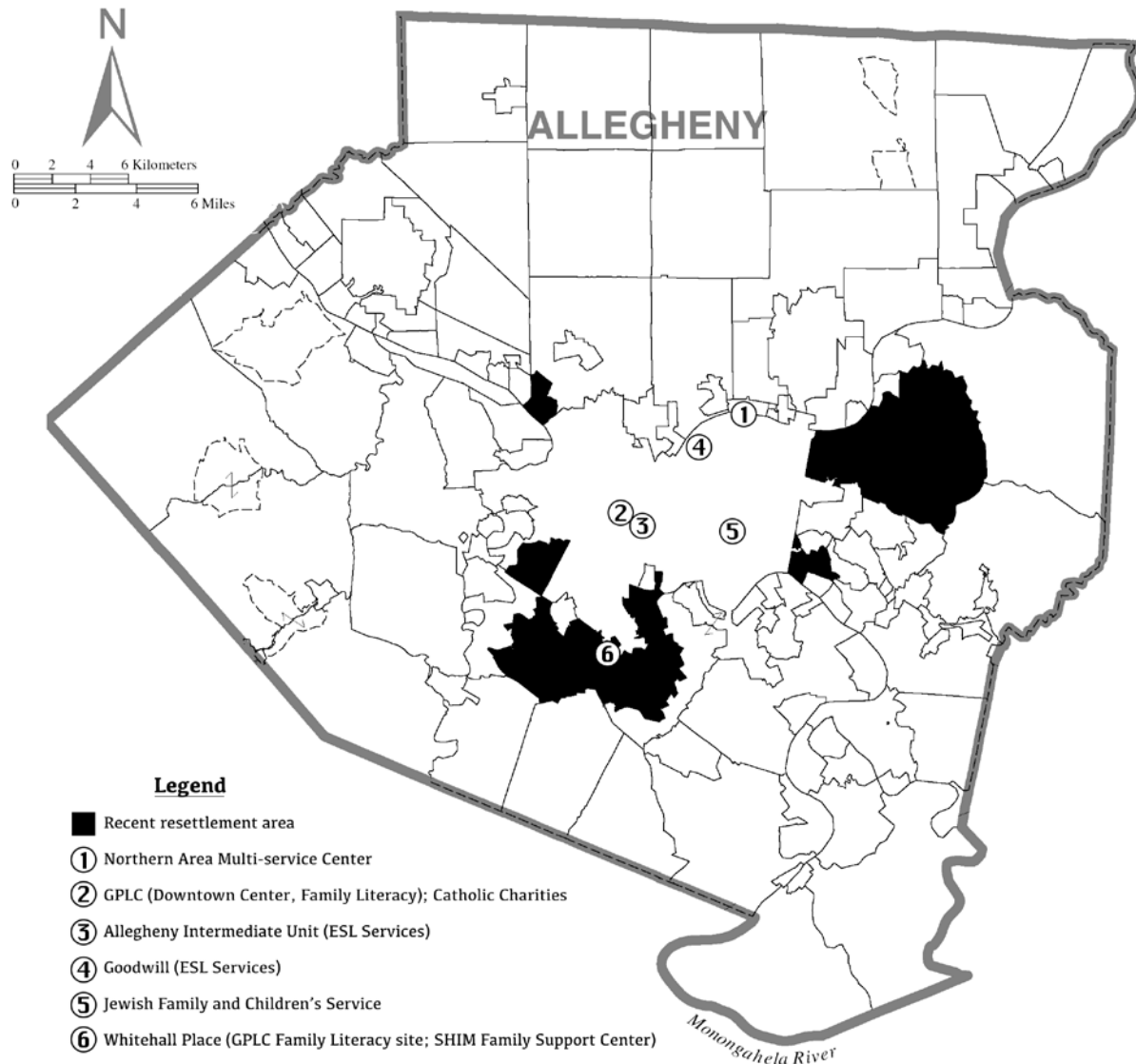
* "Other" populations did not surpass more than 45 individuals from a single country in any given year

* **Source:** Pennsylvania Refugee Resettlement Program

Refugees in the city of Pittsburgh and Allegheny County are served by a variety of different actors beyond those organizations with an explicit mandate to serve refugees. Such organizations are generally located within city limits. Catholic Charities, Jewish Family and Children's Services, and the Northern Area Multi-service Center provide initial resettlement

support as well as cultural and vocational orientation services. The Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council and the Allegheny Intermediate Unit provide ESL and adult-education courses to Allegheny County. The Pittsburgh Public School district is in charge of the ESL programming provided in the public schools within the city limits. The South Hills Interfaith Ministries' Families Support Center provides early childhood development and parenting services to the families within the housing development where the site is located. Goodwill of Southwestern Pennsylvania, though not included in the ethnography, provides some ESL (not utilized by refugees) and vocational training services. The Acculturation for Justice, Access, and Peace Outreach (AJAPO), also not included in this survey, provides a range of acculturation, family, youth, and immigration services to African and Caribbean refugees and immigrants to Allegheny County.

Figure 4. Resettlement areas in Allegheny County mentioned by interviewees



4.3 PROGRAM DESCRIPTIONS – PORTRAITS OF SERVICES PROVIDED

Pittsburgh has three non-governmental agencies responsible for refugee resettlement: Catholic Charities (CC), Jewish Family and Children Service (JFCS), and the Northern Area

Multi-service Center (NAMS). All three organizations provide a range of social services to the people of Pittsburgh in addition to their refugee-related work. In regards to refugees, fostering self-sufficiency is central to the mission of all three programs. CC wants to “improve the quality of life for the people who are the most vulnerable” by “helping them become self-sufficient in their lives”; JFCS's stated aim is to “work with partners to help newly arriving refugees reach self-sufficiency”; and NAMS' goal is to “help people to be able to help themselves without relying on assistance”.

In order to be admitted into the United States, a refugee must acquire sponsorship from one of the nine national voluntary contracted by PRM to provide resettlement services. The agencies in Pittsburgh are all affiliated with one of these volags: CC with the United States Council of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), JFCS with the Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society (HIAS), and NAMS with the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants (USCRI). As the first point of contact of refugees upon entering the country, these volag affiliates are responsible for receiving refugees at the airport and then providing services during the Resettlement and Placement (R&P) period. During this period, which lasts for three to six months after arrival, the agencies are tasked with providing the “core services” that enable newly arrived refugees to transition into their new lives. Time lines for the delivery of these services are designated by *cooperative agreements* between the DoS/PRM and the private agencies (volags) authorized to provide resettlement assistance. These agreements ensure that all agencies are providing the services within the same time frame and that refugees are receiving the services that they require.

The R&P process begins even before the refugee's arrival. As soon as they receive word from their national affiliate, the local agency begins to work to locate appropriate housing for their charges so the refugees have a place to live immediately or soon after arrival. The location

must be safe, affordable, and on a bus-line. Proximity to family members in the area or other resettled refugees of the same ethnic group is also taken into consideration, and Catholic Charities mentioned that they make an effort to contact any family members already settled in the area to assist with communication during these initial days. The Pittsburgh neighborhoods and outlying boroughs mentioned as having sizable refugee populations include Baldwin, Bellevue, Carrick, Castle Shannon, Green Tree, Mt. Lebanon, Mt. Oliver, Penn Hills, Swissvale, and Whitehall. JFCS said they avoid resettling within the city center due to safety concerns and the expense of doing so. Apartments are outfitted with beds, basic furniture, household goods, and enough food to last refugees until they can be brought to the Department of Public Welfare to apply for food stamps. Agency staff pick-up refugees at the airport with an interpreter and bring them to their new home. Once there, they are provided with a basic home orientation and familiarized with concepts such as smoke alarms, hot and cold water and an explanation of everything that will allow them to be safe until the following day.

Each refugee is assigned a case manager, and starting the following day they begin the crucial process of connecting the refugees with the services that will help them going forward. Within seven business days, they are taken to the office of the Social Security Administration to be issued a Social Security number and to the Department of Public Welfare to register for food stamps, and medical assistance. As long as they do not have special issues that require more immediate assistance, within the first thirty days they will receive their first medical screening with follow-up appointments scheduled as necessary. Also within this period, if any of the arrivals are of school age, they are enrolled in the local school district. If eligible for employment and interested, refugee clients can also sign up for the 'match grant' program. The idea behind the program is to obtain employment within 120 days after arrival, so refugees receive more

assistance in a shorter period. However, self-sufficiency must be achieved without accessing public cash assistance. The employment and cultural orientation process also begin during their first month.

Employment orientation first involves a skill assessment to determine eligibility for employment and what the individual is qualified for and able to do, or if they are ineligible due to medical concerns or insurmountable language barriers. It continues with workshops to teach about employment in the United States, workplace ethics, and concepts important to employment in the United States like being punctual. Assistance is also given with resume creation, interview norms, and the job search procedure. These orientations occur on-site at the agencies' offices. If possible, they are referred to employment specialists within the agency to be placed at a job. NAMS said that they also do follow-ups with the employers to make sure that everything is going well.

Cultural orientation courses focus on life skills. Topics covered include driving, handling money, general cultural and behavioral expectations, the values of the United States, and how to make use of public transit. Services are provided as per the refugees needs, and Govinda said that if a family seems to be adapting well or has a social support network of individuals who have been in the country for a while, the case management will drop off. Beyond these first thirty days, case management provided by the agencies involves making sure that the refugees are acclimating properly to the United States. They help the refugees understand letters they receive in the mail, answer questions about bills and housing, and help negotiate any issues with landlords.

4.3.1 Language support

Regarding language support, Leah (JFCS) said that every interaction with the refugees involves interpretation to some degree. JFCS has one full-time staff member who speaks Nepali to assist with the Nepali-speaking Bhutanese population and other staff members who speak Russian and Spanish. They also use volunteers and family members where necessary. All three agencies make use of contracted hourly interpreters in their services. None of the resettlement agencies in Pittsburgh provide significant language-services directly. JFCS said that they screen and train in-home volunteers to help out their clients navigate the hassles of everyday life and also to practice their English in an informal setting. NAMS reported that they are trying to work with ESL providers to come to the NAMS site to provide beginning ESL as part of their employment programs but also that this was still in the planning stages.

The primary way that resettlement agencies support language-learning is by referring their clients to one of the city's two language-service providers: the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council (GPLC) or the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU) within 10 to 14 days post-arrival. GPLC is a non-profit organization that provides GED, adult basic education, ESL, and family literacy classes to both native speakers and ESL populations. The AIU is part of Pennsylvania's public education system and provides specialized educational services to Allegheny County, including adult education, workforce development, and ESL courses. This referral process usually involves arranging an appointment for language-proficiency assessment and enrollment in courses, available to the student at no cost. CC also reported that they will physically take their clients to the GPLC offices in order to facilitate this process. All the organizations reported being in communication with the ESL providers, especially GPLC, and JFCS mentioned that

they often will tell GPLC when they are settling families in large groups, on the chance that they are able to provide classes in that location.

In their downtown center (DTC), GPLC offers 10 courses. While not exclusively targeted towards refugees, it was reported that they make up the bulk of the students attending the courses in the DTC. Four days a week, for two hours at a time, they offer a Foundations course, three separate literacy courses (“bridge”, “beginner ESL”, and “beginner”), a high-beginner ESL course, a Job Seekers course that focuses on workplace related language and vocational skills, and an ESL GED course. The DTC also offers an ESL reading course and an intermediate level ESL course for two days a week for two hours at a time. An evening GED course is also available and is attended by a few refugee students. Given the transitional and sometimes transient nature of their student population, GPLC maintains an open entry, open exit policy in their classes and students are encouraged to attend as much as possible. One teacher estimated that average student will attend for 6 to 12 months and receive 200 to 400 hours of instruction. In addition to their downtown center classes, GPLC also provide volunteer-run courses in off-site locations such as in housing developments with significant refugee populations as well as a one-on-one tutoring program. Their downtown center reported that they offered 17 courses total in the last year in addition to six off-site courses serving a total of 469 ESL students.

In addition to the classes offered in their downtown center, GPLC also operates two Family Literacy Centers at satellite sites. One is located in downtown Pittsburgh in a different building than the DTC; the other is located within the Whitehall Place (formerly Prospect Park) housing development in the borough of Whitehall. The mission of these centers is to provide literacy programming that serves both the parent and the child and fosters an environment conducive of literacy in the home. Their class topic are wide ranging and include explicit ESL,

workforce preparation, parenting education appropriate to the United States, early childhood education, civics, citizenship preparation, life skills, and interactive literacy activities.

In the downtown Family Center, all of these topics are covered in a single class for two hours a day, Monday through Thursday. Parents go with a GPLC staff member while the children go into a separate room with an AmeriCorps member for early childhood education. About once a week the two groups come together and engage in an “interactive literacy activity” aimed at getting the parents to interact with the children in a way that promotes literacy. This often takes the form of a group story-time with an associated craft project. The Family Literacy center located in Whitehall Place offers a wider range of classes not limited to family literacy. They offer three different courses, at three different levels each, for a total of nine different classes. In the mornings, they offer Family Literacy classes four days a week at the beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels. In the afternoon, also four days a week, they have adult education courses at pre-literacy, low beginner, and high beginner levels. Two evenings a week they offer adult education courses at the low beginning, high beginning and intermediate levels. Courses are taught by GPLC staff teachers, AmeriCorps members, and volunteers. Additionally, their space hosts a class organized by the Nepali-Bhutanese community one night a week, taught by a GPLC-trained tutor.

AIU has four levels of English classes at their main site, though Sue said that the percentage of refugees taking advantage of these courses is low. The career services they offer include job counseling, job workshops, and resume help. More heavily attended by refugees are their vocational ESL (VESL) courses in the afternoons, a certain hours of which are required for those on public assistance (see section 4.5.4). They also offer English courses at sites in the

nearby boroughs of Carrick and Sharpsburg, entirely attended by refugees. The course in Carrick has a civics focus while the course in Sharpsburg has a jobs and civics focus.

4.3.1.1 ESL in the Pittsburgh Public School District

Within the city of Pittsburgh, the Pittsburgh Public School district (PPS) has a sizable, citywide ESL program. The program is a central arm of the school district and is responsible for managing the program entire by providing teacher supervision, organizing translation and interpretation where needed, promoting intercultural awareness, and working with mainstream teachers who interact with ESL students. As of the 2011-2012 school year, there were 620 students enrolled in the program.

If a student qualifies for ESL services, PPS is legally mandated by both the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the federal government (*vis-à-vis* NCLB) to provide language-support to them. Whenever a refugee family enrolls in the school system, they first take a 'Home Language Survey' (HLS). The survey is a one-page form that consists of four questions about the child's language experience, including whether they speak languages other than English and what the primary language spoken in the home is. The PPS HLS has been adapted from a version provided by Pennsylvania Department of Education. If the HLS indicates that language-support is required, they are enrolled in the ESL program and scheduled to attend school at one of the district's ESL sites.

PPS utilizes a “regional center model” to provide ESL services in the district. In this model, rather than having the district's ESL resources spread throughout the city, teachers and ESL assets are concentrated in a few select locations to better serve their ELL students and provide equal access to the program. When a student is in the program they are enrolled in and provided transportation to the nearest site, the locations of which are spread throughout the city.

This model arose partially in a response to a complaint filed with the Office of Civil Rights by the Education Law Center of Pennsylvania (Citation) brought on behalf of Somali refugee students that alleged that the district had not “developed or implemented an adequate system for communicating with them or their parents in a language they understand”, had “unnecessarily segregated the Somali students from students of other backgrounds” and were thereby “being denied equal access to, and equal treatment within, the District's education program” (Education Law Center, 2005) violating the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Equal Education Opportunity Act.

These ESL regional sites are regular schools with additional resources to support students whose L1 is not English. They have on-site ESL teachers, assistants that speak the students' L1s and extra professional development opportunities for teachers. These include cultural awareness and sensitivity trainings as well as targeted pedagogical workshops designed to help address the specialized needs of the students. PPS has 11 regional ESL sites in the district. There are five primary schools (Arsenal PreK-5, Banksville K-5, Beechwood PreK-5, Minadeo PreK-5, Woolslair K-5), two hybrid primary/middle schools (Colfax K-8, Greenfield PreK-8), two middle schools (Arsenal 6-8, South Hills 6-8) and two high schools (Allderdice High School, Brashear High School). The district employs 28 ESL teachers and one travelling teacher. These teachers have monthly meetings to discuss problems and concerns.

English as a Second Language is “core content” in Pennsylvania, which means that if a child qualifies for language-support, they cannot opt out of the program. ESL takes the place of the students' Language Arts credit and during the period assigned to that subject, students attend to a separate ESL class. Students complete the rest of their coursework in mainstream classrooms. Two schools, South Hills 6-8 and Brashear High School, have sheltered programs

due to particularly high populations of refugee learners with interrupted or no experience with formal schooling. Therefore in these schools, science, social studies and math are provided in specialized classes that employ pedagogical techniques adapted to address their needs.

4.3.1.2 ESL in other schools

Not all area schools have the ELL student population to justify a full-fledged ESL program. In these cases, the school usually contracts with AIU to provide supplementary language-support as needed. Districts that came up in my interviews that had contracted with AIU to provide ESL services include Mount Lebanon, North Hills, and Penn Hills. Baldwin-Whitehall, North Allegheny, and Shaler school districts have all previously contracted with the agency but have since “taken back” their programs and now administer them completely in-house. Keystone Oaks also has a sizeable refugee population, but they administer their own program and were not included in this ethnography.

As a PA Department of Education document, the HLS is used to determine whether the student qualifies for ESL services. If a language other than English comes up, the student is screened by AIU. AIU administers the WIDA-ACCESS Placement Test (the W-APT) to evaluate their listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. Their scores on this evaluation determine how many hours of ESL instruction they will receive, up to two per day. Depending on the school's and teacher's schedules, this instruction may take two forms. If all schedules are compatible, a teacher will come in during the Language Arts period to teach an ELL-centered class. If schedules are not compatible, the teacher will do a *push-in*. A push-in is when a teacher sits next to the student in their mainstream class and supports them with whatever subject they are working on that day.

A few school districts with substantial ESL populations, such as the North Hills and Mount Lebanon school districts, have contract teachers on-site for the entire school day. These instructors function as regular district teachers with students coming to them for Language Arts class. This is, however, unusual and most teachers contracted with AIU are itinerant. They travel between schools, moving between levels and subjects throughout the day. Their methods of instruction are similarly inconsistent in the course of a day; at one school they may provide independent instruction while at another they may provide push-in assistance.

4.3.1.3 Federal testing guidelines

Once a student enters the ESL program there are strict federal guidelines established by NCLB that designate when they may exit the program. All ELL students' language proficiencies are reassessed yearly by way of the ACCESS (Assessing Comprehension and Communication in English State-to-State) test, which evaluates their ability in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. Students may exit the program when they pass 'Level C' on the ACCESS test, receive at least a C in all four core subjects (reading, math, social studies, and science) and have to pass, at a 'basic' level, the PSSA test in the subjects of reading and math. The PSSA is the Pennsylvania System of School Assessment, which is, according to the Pennsylvania Department of Education's web site, "a standards-based, criterion-referenced assessment used to measure a student's attainment of the academic standards". Once they have exited the program, students are monitored for a period of two years, as mandated by NCLB and requirements set forth by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, to verify that they are appropriately adjusted and able to perform academically in mainstream classes. This monitoring takes the form of check-ins with teachers and tracking of PSSA scores and grades. PPS reported that this happens four times in the first year and once semester in the second year post-exit. Once their progress is judged to be

adequate, they exit completely from the system and are no longer monitored by the ESL program.

4.3.1.4 Keep it Real

In addition to the formal educational support afforded through the school districts, another program is available to provide academic support. Keep it Real (KIR) is a student organization at the University of Pittsburgh that provides in-home tutoring to the Somali Bantu community. Imran, the group's current president, said that it was established in 2006 as part of a student's thesis work. KIR has around 75 volunteer tutors, serving 40 Somali Bantu families around the city. Their goals are to provide educational assistance and to act as academic role models in the "Big Brothers / Big Sisters" vein. Two tutors are assigned to each family, with the goal of keeping the same pairings for the volunteers' entire tenure with the group. The aim is to provide consistent help to the children and foster comfort and familiarity between the volunteer and the family. Tutors serve students of all ages, from K – 12, in whatever subjects the students most need assistance. In the past, they have attempted to provide some assistance to the parents in conjunction with the tutoring visits, but the program never caught on because the main appeal of the group was working with children.

In addition to their tutoring, KIR hosts two supplemental weekend programs called "Real Saturdays" and "Real Women". The programs operate in much the same way, but the former has only male participants while the latter has only females. Each group has a consistent attendance of around 10 children. They partner with other student organizations such as Pitt Engineering, the Pitt Outdoors Club, or the Pitt Basketball team to provide a three-hour education program. Occasionally they also incorporate more explicitly education topics such as conflict resolution.

4.3.1.5 Other programs

Located within Whitehall Place, the same site as the GPLC Family Literacy Center, is the Prospect Park Family Center, a Family Support Center (FSC) that is part of the Family Support Network of Allegheny County. FSCs are funded by the Allegheny County Department of Human Services and are designed to supplement existing community services and provide assistance with concerns such as child development, parenting education, and prenatal care. As an institution, FSCs are designed to focus on preventative care for families and communities in need. The site in Whitehall Place just happens to specialize in serving the refugee population as one community in need. There are 33 FSCs around Allegheny County and each has a lead agency responsible for administration of the site. The lead agency for the Whitehall Place location is South Hills Interfaith Ministries (SHIM), a social service agency whose primary aim is to bridge people towards self-sufficiency through a variety of services. In addition to sponsoring the FSC, SHIM also has a food pantry, an early childhood program, and an after-school program in Whitehall Place.

The FSC is funded to serve families with children from ages zero to five, though they sometimes provide less intensive services to families with older children. The staff provides home visits that focus on parenting skills and education about appropriate child development. They often also provide “case management light” services, in that they help their clients deal with their everyday problems such as paying bills, negotiating interactions with the landlord, and overall life issues. They provide development screenings to catch any developmental issues and work to address the problems where necessary. When their clients are pregnant, they also track the health of the mother and record statistics such as birth weight and the time when prenatal care was initiated to ensure that new children are healthy. They make sure that children of the

right age are ready to enroll in kindergarten. And finally, they help their clients work towards self-sufficiency by helping them with resumes, tax preparation, and creating goals to improve their general economic standing.

While they do not provide language classes directly, due to their proximity to the GPLC Family Literacy Center they are able to encourage attendance, and they schedule their events to avoid conflicting with class-times. They have also collaborated with GPLC's teachers so that the language used in the FSC's parenting curriculum is reinforced their English classes. For example, students might learn a term like "fine motors skills" in their GPLC class and then hear it again during a SHIM home visit. FSC staff incorporates literacy activities in their home visits as much as possible by bringing books into the home and encouraging their clients to read with their children daily, in both English and the family's native language. They have also twice hosted an event called "Read Aloud". During this program, all of the families they work with are bussed to a church to listen to a story and engage in related craft projects. At the end, the children take a pledge to read daily minutes and are given a box of books targeted at their reading level and a calendar on which to mark their reading progress. Lindsey mentioned that this seems to have been very successful and that many of the kids have reported on their reading.

In addition to these formal sources of assistance there are also a number of informal sources of support in the community. There was repeated mention of a church in Bellevue involved with the Bhutanese Christian community, providing transportation to worship services and informal language classes on their own.

4.4 RESOURCES

The primary source of funding for resettlement agencies ultimately comes from USRAP in the form of grants from PRM and ORR. Depending on the type of assistance, these grants are routed first to the local office's national affiliate or to the Pennsylvania Office of Refugee Resettlement before being released to the local agency. Federal funding comes in the form of R&P grants from PRM, and Refugee Social Service (RSS) grants (formula and discretionary), Targeted Assistance Grants (TAG), and match grant funding from ORR. Most of these funds go towards case management and establishing their clients in the United States. National volags also provide resources to their local affiliates directly. Both CC and NAMS reported that their volags supply them with their cultural orientation materials and provide administrative support in the form of technical assistance, staff training, and professional development opportunities.

GPLC also receives federal funding but none of it from ORR or PRM. Instead, they receive money from the Department of Education for family literacy. While such funds are not designed for refugees as such, GPLC decided that the refugee population was the in the most need and would be the most receptive to the services of the Family Literacy sites. Their annual report states that GPLC receives approximately sixty percent of their revenue from government grants and the other forty percent or so comes from gifts from individuals, the United Way, grants from corporations and foundations, fund-raising events, and earned income. Intermediate units as an institution receive funding from five state and federal funding streams completely divorced from USRAP (Pennsylvania House Education Committee, 2011), and Sue said that the AIU gets most of their funding at the state level from the Pennsylvania Department of Education and at the federal level from the Workforce Investment Act. Some of the resettlement agencies also receive federal funding not specifically targeted for refugees. JFCS, for example, has

received a grant from the Department of Labor through the Three Rivers Workforce Investment Board intended to help youth go to work after high school and to help them pursue of post-secondary education. SHIM receives most of their funding through Allegheny County Department of Human Services as part of a network of agencies likewise concerned with serving populations in need generally.

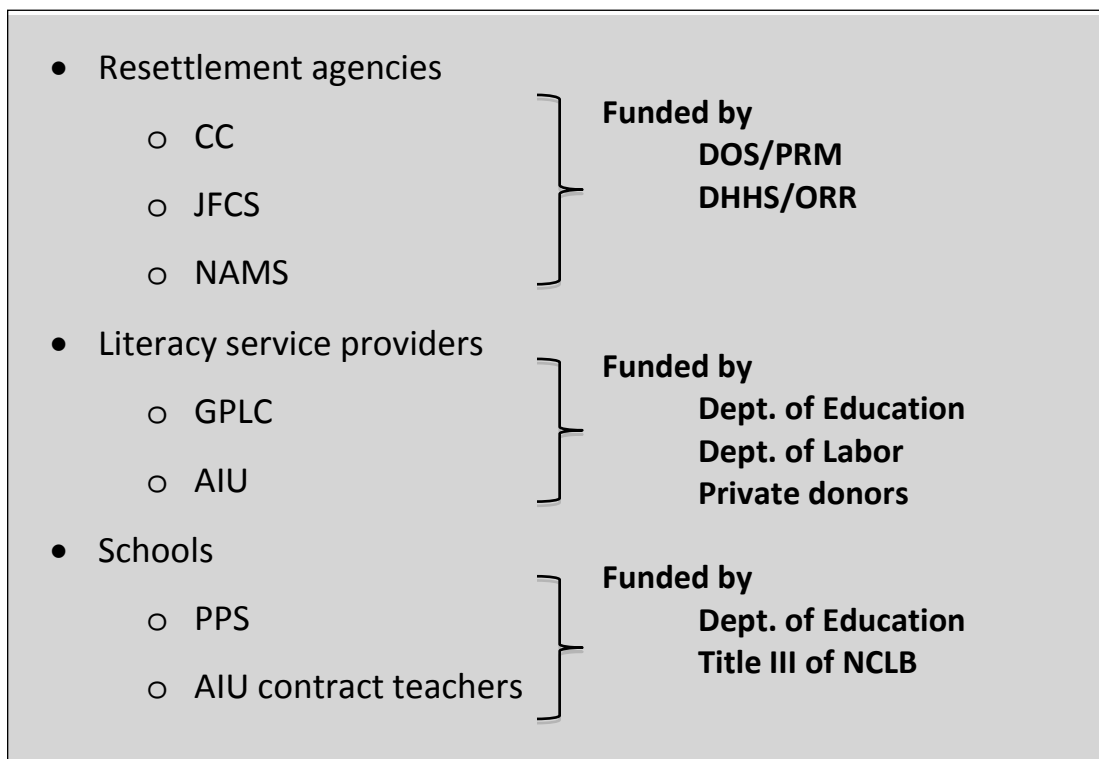
The revenue stream that the PPS ESL program has the most discretionary control over originates from Title III of No Child Left Behind. As mentioned in section 2.6.16.2, Title III funds are allotted to states according to how many ELL children the state contains in proportion to the total number of ELL children exist nationwide. Therefore, the more ELL children the district enrolls, the more funding the Pennsylvania Department of Education receives to help fund ESL services. Benjamin said that PPS is empowered to use their Title III budget as programming and teacher needs dictate. However, such funds can be used only for supplemental materials such as Nepali dictionaries or a professional speaker's honorarium. They cannot be used, for example, for purchasing pre-made curricula or hiring a new teacher. A lot of their pedagogical resources have been developed within the district. ESL teachers created their elementary ESL curriculum in-house, and the district is working on a high school curriculum to with accompanying daily instruction guides.

Cash and in-kind donations from private donors are also utilized by many agencies. Both CC and SHIM mentioned hosting drives independently or in conjunction with area Sunday schools and church youth groups for specific items such as diapers, coats, and socks. JFCS also mentioned receiving donations from area churches to help stock houses with materials such as toiletries, kitchen goods, and bedding. Both SHIM and GPLC have received a substantial number of toys from a retiring preschool teacher, and a private donor gifted a thousand dollars to SHIM

for sewing machines after she saw in an electronic newsletter that the mothers at the site enjoyed sewing.

Many organizations, especially the smaller programs, also reported seeking non-governmental sources of funding. GPLC mentioned that the family centers were supported in part by grants from private foundations or donors like Toyota. SHIM has received a grant from the Buell Foundation and occasionally receives mini-grants to fund particular programs. For example, they received a grant from the University of Pittsburgh's Office of Child Development for an environmental-theme program, and the families decided to use that to fund a community container garden. JFCS said that they have seven different sources of funding. GPLC is similarly funded from several different sources including endowments and private donors.

Figure 5. Summary of primary funding sources in Pittsburgh



4.4.1 Coordination between agencies

Given their mission overlap, there is a fair amount of collaboration within Pittsburgh's "refugee sector" and each group makes use of the others' specialties. CC, now that they are focusing primarily on the R&P period exclusively, refer their clients to JFCS and NAMS for employment services and to the Acculturation for Justice, Access & Peace Outreach (AJAPO) for continuing case management beyond the initial R&P period. JFCS has received grants to provide in-service trainings to teachers within PPS, and PPS itself works with all of the resettlement agencies to help facilitate the enrollment process and to provide orientations about the American education system. JFCS operates a legal clinic utilized by CC's clients that assists people with legal questions, Green Card acquisition, and the citizenship process. NAMS is in communication with Department of Public Welfare and Allegheny County Health Department to help facilitate medical screenings and public benefits sign-ups. As previously mentioned, all resettlement agencies refer their clients to GPLC and AIU for language classes and communicate with these institutions to convey when new populations are entering the city and if there are any heavily populated areas that could be well served by location-based classes. AIU and NAMS have partnered to provide English courses at the site in Sharpsburg. SHIM has partnered with several agencies outside of the traditional network of service providers to implement specific programs. For example, they have partnered with Just Harvest, a local non-profit that focuses on issues of hunger and poverty, to provide tax preparation services, with a local women's shelter to talk about domestic abuse, and an organization called 'Birth Circle' to provide Lamaze classes, birthing support and doulas for expecting mothers. Additionally, JFCS has office hours once a week at SHIM's location so that their clients can drop in for assistance with miscellaneous problems such as understanding their mail or paying bills.

These collaborations have also be facilitated by an Immigrant and International Advisory Council established by the Allegheny County Department of Human Services that is made up of representatives from consumers, refugees, refugee agencies, as well as representatives from the Asian and Latino communities in Pittsburgh. There are 20 members on the council, plus subcommittees on specific areas of interest such as foster care. The organization helps member institutions share information, keep lines of communication open, and pool resources for mandated services that might be cost prohibitive for smaller agencies such as interpretation. They have also created a course on cultural competency and are piloting a refugee youth mentoring program. Lindsey mentioned working with the council to provide support for mothers who want to establish in-home daycares to enable other mothers to go to work.

4.5 RECOGNIZED POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Beyond the foundational Refugee Act of 1980, the primary pieces of legislation recognized by refugee service providers as impacting their work are Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act, Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, welfare law, and state and local budget constraints regarding public transportation.

4.5.1 Funding

Funding issues was one of the most direct policy impacts mentioned in the interviews. While funding for direct refugee funding is generally predictable due to its historical bipartisan

support, funding for other services within the constellation of agencies that impact the lives of refugees is more fickle. GPLC noted that they have lost about 50% of the state funding they had four years ago but are expected to provide the same level of service. Similarly, in the past, GPLC's services were supplemented by Literacy*AmeriCorps members¹⁶. However, a recent nationwide AmeriCorps re-prioritization away from adult education services cut the Literacy*AmeriCorps program entirely, thereby removing the number of staff at the center and limiting what the services they can provide. Next year the downtown Family Literacy center will be supplemented with a different, part-time AmeriCorps program, but will still be unable to reinstate afternoon classes.

Transportation budget woes on the state and local levels also impact the capability of refugees to access the services theoretically available to them. For example, GPLC provides bus tickets to its students, so an increase in bus fares results in increased financial burden on the organization. Route cuts are also threatening the students' ability to attend classes, as does uneven performance by the buses themselves. At the GPLC Family Literacy Center downtown, the bus system also limits the length of classes. In order to allow the students to use their three-hour-lifespan transfers to return home, the teacher has to restrict how long they meet.

4.5.2 No Child Left Behind

Policy has the most direct impact on language-support in the public school districts via NCLB in that it facilitates the entire ESL program. The act funds and provides guidelines for

¹⁶ AmeriCorps is a domestic service corps that funds year-long positions with non-profits in a variety of capacities across the country.

translation and interpretation services, ESL services in general, and teacher certification guidelines. In order to teach within the PPS ESL program, a teacher must be “highly qualified” and meet specific requirements that vary between grade levels. For elementary school, they must have certification to teach K-6 in Pennsylvania as well as an ESL program specialist endorsement. To teach high school ESL, they must have 7-12 Communications or ESL certifications. NCLB also provides areas to focus on in the program and a series of expectations and targets to aim for. Within the classroom, broader educational policy impact how the lessons are structured. Such lessons must adhere to both Pennsylvania state subject standards as well as state ESL subject standards. These are highly specific content guidelines that students must know that dictate things like how many prefixes a student ought to know at a particular grade level. Teachers need to include in their lesson plans which standards are being targeted.

4.5.3 Civil Rights Act of 1964

Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act any agency that receives federal funding is prohibited from discriminating on the ground of race, color, or national origin. This has been interpreted to include discrimination Limited English Proficiency (LEP) as a consequence of national origin (see section 2.6.16.13) and such agencies therefore are obligated to provide interpretation services to LEP clients. This includes any medical institution that accepts Medicaid or Medicare. However, SHIM reported that it can still be challenging to ensure that interpretation services are available for every appointment where it is necessary, and they have had an especially difficult time getting mental health providers to provide interpretation services. One reason for this may be that that compliance with such procedures are based on a case-by-case basis, and the size of LEP population is taken into consideration in the assessment

(Minnesota Medical Association, 2004). SHIM suspects that because refugee populations make up a relatively small percentage of the area's population, medical providers are able to shirk their interpretation obligations. Other resources are available, but they have had to specifically inform providers about interpretation resources available such as 'Language Line', a private company that institutions can contract with to provide call-in interpretation services.

4.5.4 Welfare policy

Policy mandates regarding receipt of welfare services also influence refugees. If an individual is receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) they are obliged to engage in a certain number of work training or employment-related "participation hours" per week. If that individual is Limited English Proficient those hours usually take the form of vocational ESL (VESL) courses. Also, to maintain access to public benefits after seven years, a refugee must apply for citizenship, a process that can only be started after five years in-country.

4.6 CHALLENGES

The refugee service sector in Pittsburgh has definitely matured over the last decade, but it still faces significant problems providing services to their clients. A few specific challenges were mentioned in the previous section, but larger patterns also emerged from the interviews.

Foremost amongst these problems are limited resources, acculturation and adapting to the United States, problems surrounding adequate attendance resulting from strained personal resources, and school-related difficulties.

4.6.1 Limited resources

While R&P funding is relatively steady, the agencies providing language courses do not have the same peace of mind. AIU has lost funding in recent years, resulting in combined courses with multiple proficiency levels in the same classroom and the cutting of a previously offered Civics course. JFCS reported that they used to provide language courses but that now most of the funding for ESL goes through the Department of Education to schools. They also said that in the past GPLC was able to quickly respond to new resettlement with expanded services targeted that location, but no longer. General lack of ESL resources available was also lamented, though both AIU and GPLC both received praise for the work they are able to do. PPS also specifically mentioned the issue of “managing growth in a climate of budget constraints”. Another resource limitation that makes providing services difficult is lack of space, especially for the smaller programs. SHIM noted that their limited space restricts the number of people they can have on staff and means they are unable to have big events for the entire community. The downtown GPLC Family Literacy center was recently forced out of a previous location and consequently lost half of their space. This has made teaching more difficult as it limits the instructor's ability to do group work or separate the class by levels.

Soon after arrival in the United States, resettlement agencies need to establish their client in Pittsburgh, which means finding them a place to live and a job. However, access to public transit is a non-negotiable factor, and the recent route cuts and increasing fare prices make finding a location difficult. Nasser (NAMS) also ruefully noted that, yes, Pittsburgh has affordable housing, but finding it is another matter entirely. Another difficulty with finding housing is that refugees often like to live together in extended family units, but this often causes

problems with landlords. Leah (JFCS) noted that have been cases where landlords have refused to take on new refugee tenants, regardless of the move's illegality.

4.6.2 Acculturation

The largest overall issue reported by agencies interviewed was cultural adaptation, and dealing with culture shock is something that must be overcome before language learning can become a consistent focus. In the schools, the largest problem cited was adjusting to the expectations and structures of the United States education system. Benjamin (PPS) noted that refugee kids are often used to a more lecture-based system with every moment planned ahead of time. Learning to deal with the more interactive pedagogical style common in America in addition to all of the paperwork, bureaucracy, and tests that are involved with the system are large hurdles to academic success. Cultural differences in the realm of parenting are another complication. Many refugees are accustomed to living in close-knit communities where keeping a close eye on children is not a top priority because if they run away another community member will bring them back. Sometimes issues of corporal punishment also arise, and in Whitehall Place Lindsey (SHIM: FSC) said that there have been cases where the Office of Children, Youth, and Families have become involved due to reports of child abuse. Other miscellaneous issues, like adapting to the food or the weather also interfere with speedy adaptation. Leah (JFCS) and Martha (AIU) both said that the refugees are not used to American food, and what they do like is “all the wrong things” (i.e., junk food). Leah mentioned that a large part of the cultural orientation classes offered by JFCS involve managing the expectations of their clients. Often they will think that even a little English will enable them to get a better job than what it does in reality. Sometimes they are also surprised by what things cost.

Both Fuad (SB) and Govinda said that the initial orientations provided by the resettlement agencies were helpful, but Govinda said that oftentimes they were not enough. He said that a big problem amongst the Bhutanese community that was not covered by the cultural orientation is home maintenance issues. He said issues like pest control, how to use a vacuum cleaner, how to control the air conditioner or the heater, and how to do laundry were not adequately covered. He said many families have had conflicts with landlords due to inadequate property upkeep. They also are not sure how to contact landlords to get things fixed. Though he did not go into much detail, Govinda reported that members of the Bhutanese community have also run into problems with the law because they are unfamiliar with American cultural norms regarding knocking on strangers' doors when looking for assistance or loitering in spaces such as gas station parking lots.

4.6.3 Strained personal resources resulting in low attendance

Regular attendance to cultural and language courses is a problem wrapped up in a host of different troubles. Refugees have to deal with chronic medical issues, culture shock, PTSD, depression, limited self-confidence, lagging motivation, time-sensitive appointments with case workers, and an underestimation of the time-commitment necessary for learning English. While everyone is invited to cultural orientation workshops during the R&P period, not everyone attends. Some think they do not need the classes and return later once they realize the gaps in their knowledge. This lack of cultural knowledge can be particularly problematic when it comes to employment. Sometimes their lack of punctuality, a notion less valued in some home cultures (or devalued in the refugee camps), interferes with their ability to maintain a job or make it to

medical appointments. Sometimes older refugees neglect orientation courses, thinking that their children will be able to help them out. This can, however, create a power imbalance where the children become the gatekeepers to access to the outside world and refuse to help their elders without payment. This kind of situation upends the traditional power structures as the elders lose their status and their ability to speak for the community.

Where language learning is involved, self-image is also a vital component. Gail said “some of these women don't have a sense of themselves as people who can succeed in this environment”. As a result of these factors, ESL can appear to be a low priority. Leah said a constant frustration at JFCS is that refugees will “show up for doctors' appointments but not ESL classes”. Ultimately, many refugees’ energies are being strained between the three poles of family obligations, employment, and English courses. Employment, especially, was cited as a major reason for inconsistent attendance at language classes.

Leah (JFCS) stated that R&P assistance is too short to allow for substantial language learning and someone in a refugee’s family needs to go to work within three months if they are going to provide for themselves. After they have found a job, it is difficult to attend to the material in class if they are tired from working. Such a limited timeframe means that they have to go to work without sufficient experience with the language, and limited English impedes their ability to apply for better jobs and get off of welfare.

Both Fuad (SB) and Govinda reported having to forgo English classes when they found employment. Fuad said in the past that he has tried to go to school in the morning and then work in the afternoon, but then by the next morning he was already tired and not ready to concentrate on his classes. He is presently enrolled in Community College but only taking one class a semester for fear of failing due to a lack of energy. Govinda is in a similar situation of having to

constantly balance his work, school, and familial obligations. They both also noted transportation issues. Fuad mentioned attending a class for one week before having to drop out, due to the expense of getting to class.

4.6.4 School-related difficulties

A number of issues came up surrounding refugee ELL's performance in academic settings. Benjamin (PPS) noted that even when their English proficiency is good, academic vocabulary can be an issue, especially when the student has interrupted or a lack of formal schooling. Occasionally, though, this will go the other way and native language knowledge can be a facilitator of learning. For example, if the student is familiar with the concept of photosynthesis in their L1, it makes learning about the subject in English that much easier. Fuad (SB) said that the method of instruction in the schools would sometimes get in the way of his learning in that he had difficulty understanding the tasks presented to and preferred demonstration to written instruction.

Inside and outside of the classroom, lacking literacy in their L1 makes everything more difficult and increases the amount of time it takes for them to acquire the language skills they need. Govinda (NB) reported that learning is especially an issue with the older members of the Bhutanese community who are illiterate in their L1. He said they often attend classes but then only barely understand what is being taught. If literacy is a new experience for the refugee, they sometimes have difficulty thinking abstractly about a text or having their own ideas about it. This is especially problematic when it comes to performing inference or prediction tasks. Noted Gail: "if you haven't spent a lot of time with books ... and you're not from a culture where independent thinking about a book is what's encouraged in school, then that is a real skill to learn."

Despite the acknowledged challenges, interviewees associated with area schools were hesitant to give any kind of average time period for their students' adaptation process, and said that it varies based on age level, innate ability, and what kind of background emotional or familial issues they have to deal with. Benjamin (PPS) said that there had not been any significant impact on yearly progress scores resulting from their sizeable ELL population, though that may become an issue in the future. It was said that generally, younger kids find it easier to adapt while the older students have more difficulties. Overall, the students were described as usually being pretty motivated and wanting to learn and to feel that they belong. Benjamin said that even with their limited English proficiencies, refugee students often emerge as student leaders. Nonetheless, bullying is still a problem between the native and refugee populations. Benjamin (PPS) reported issues with acceptance on both sides and having to have school meetings in the past to address the fighting. Imran (KIR) mentioned that the bullying and anti-refugee sentiment was still an issue and cited a recent fight that hospitalized several kids on both sides of the conflict.

Martha (AIU) talked about several issues that arise out of the travelling teacher model utilized by instructors contracted with AIU. Due to their transient nature, the contract teachers' schedules are always in flux. This means that from year to year they don't have the same students, and their schedules may change within the same school year to maintain at full-time hours. Even within the same day, travelling between different districts is common. As a result, they do not get the chance to build the same kinds of relationships with their students as do the teachers in the more stable regional sites in PPS. She lamented that as soon as teachers build a relationship and adapt their teaching style to their pupils, the schedules change or the student moves out of the program or out of the district and all of that progress is lost.

4.7 SUCCESSES

Despite these challenges, a number of different areas of success were also recognized by the agencies interviewed. Cited as areas of success were the school program's growth, specific programs, collaboration between agencies, access to employment, and extensive advocacy and community outreach efforts.

4.7.1 School program growth

Benjamin mentioned that PPS's program has seen a lot of improvement since the institution of the regional center model in 2005. It has helped maintain the programs, provide consistent services, and build teacher-student relationships over time. This focusing of resources has helped the district give ESL a priority and resulted in a "considerable amount" of exits from the ESL program. Another area where PPS has adapted their protocols is by enrolling the students into the district at a central location. This helps streamline the process of enrollment, which involves the transferring of immunization paperwork and the translation of transcripts, and makes administering the Home Language Survey easier. They have also become better at providing school staff with orientations to better prepare them to serve their refugee populations.

4.7.2 Successful programming

Some of the respondents mentioned specific programming that has gone over particularly well. Martha (AIU) mentioned a couple supplemental programs established in Penn Hills district using Title III money. An after-school program for refugees was started to provide extra tutoring

and was a big success. Students received extra help and teachers were able to provide more challenging homework on the days when they would be receiving this supplementary assistance. The school also used Title III funds to create a summer camp exclusively for refugee students to help address their acculturation issues. Meeting two days a week, the camp provided a lot of social and cultural programming, including field trips to sites around the city such as the incline.

In an effort to address issues of isolation felt by some of the homebound mothers and build a community amongst their clients, the SHIM FSC started a family group on Friday mornings. FSC staff and refugee families come together to drink tea, sew, or discuss whatever is on their minds, providing a very informal environment to practice their speaking. The program creates a comfortable, welcoming environment and helps remove some of the uncertainty surrounding the parenting guidance provided by the center. Partially as a result of the bonds fostered by this program, staff members have been told by their clients that “the family center is like our home”. Another successful item mentioned by Lindsey was a grant the FSC received from the Heinz Foundation that enabled them to hire a service coordinator to work with families who have chronic issues at home. This new position allows them to deal with their problems on a weekly basis instead of a monthly basis. These consistent visits mean that less information is lost and problems can be addressed more readily.

4.7.3 Collaboration

A continually cited source of success was collaboration between agencies in the form of open lines of communication and joint-projects. Martha (AIU) reported that coordinating with other teachers is the best way to provide mutually supportive instruction that catches problems that might otherwise be missed. Leah (JFCS) said that providing office hours at the SHIM FSC is

a great way to bring services to where they live and efficiency answer their questions. Lindsey mentioned that open lines of communication between agencies is especially important because otherwise families will go to the group who can help them immediately and without communication service providers may be providing redundant services.

The CC caseworkers mentioned that building relationships with other agencies enables them to call a specific person to get an update on their client's issue or to schedule an appointment. Their constant contact with UPMC has prompted, for example, UPMC to provide an extended appointment time with their clients to provide them with better service. They have at least one contact person at the different agencies they interact with. This also allows them to identify and communicate with people who really care about their clients, resulting in better service.

Gail (GPLC) cited as an area of success their extensive collaborations with the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. The Literacy Center families go to a monthly program where there is a story time with songs, and finger plays. Also during the summer, there is a program called KidsPlay in Market Square where the librarian will read a story and bring in a “special guest”. Through these programs, most of the students have library cards and go to the library without the assistance of the teacher. Many of the children at the literacy center are attending Headstart preschool programs, and GPLC is in constant communication with their teachers in a mutually beneficial relationship. Gail gives advice to Headstart teachers who are often unfamiliar with working with ESL students, and GPLC helps to ensure that messages and forms sent home with the children reach their parents. To combat some of the difficulties faced by the older members of their community, both Nancy (GPLC) and Govinda (NB) reported that members of the Bhutanese community have been using the GPLC Family Center in Whitehall Place’s space once

a week to provide language instruction to supplement the GPLC taught courses.

4.7.4 Employment

Though most of the jobs are still at minimum wage, the resettlement agencies all reported that their employment numbers are good. JFCS and CC reported that they maintain relationships with the employers after-hire to help ensure that everything is going smoothly with their clients. Refugees with limited English are most often able to get jobs doing commercial laundry, hospitality, casino, meatpacking, light manufacturing, or light assembly work. Often these are second or third shift jobs, sometimes two bus trips away. High proficiency refugees can often find jobs as personal care assistants or mailroom clerks.

4.7.5 Advocacy and community-outreach efforts

Leah (JFCS) and Nasser (NAMS) noted that the advocacy side of their job has been particularly successful, and they have been doing a lot of communication with different groups within the larger Pittsburgh community to educate people about the refugees' situation. One such example was a recent citywide World Refugee Day Celebration hosted by NAMS, the first of its kind. Through outreach they have also had landlords come in and provide housing orientations and talk to clients about the responsibilities of renting.

For its part, PPS hosts individual parent meetings and meetings every month or so to help address parental concerns and connect with the refugee community. They have also done outreach within the native-speaker community within the school and with area civic groups such as the Chamber of Commerce to educate native-Pittsburghers about the growing refugee

population. Such outreach often takes the form of presentations about the challenges the refugee population faces regarding education and more broadly. They also answer requests for information from the media, universities, and other organizations. (See also: section 4.4.1)

5.0 CONCLUSIONS

5.1 DISCUSSION OF THE SITUATION IN PITTSBURGH

It is clear that the “refugee sector” in Allegheny County has seen significant growth in the last decade, but the city seems to be adapting to meet the needs of its new residents. Many of the programs surveyed were established in the last ten years. PPS's regional site model began around 2005, and KIR was born a year after. The SHIM FSC was founded in 2007 after community discussions recognized that the families in Whitehall Place (née Prospect Park) needed extra support services, and the Northern Area Multi-Service Center established their refugee resettlement program within the last two years. Additionally, the Acculturation for justice, Access, and Peace Outreach (AJAPO) is reported as being in the process of establishing their own resettlement program to begin in 2013. The extensive collaborations reported also demonstrate that service providers are willing to go outside of their organizations to properly serve their clients, and their extended advocacy efforts show they are working to ensure others in the community are aware of the unique challenges their clients face. Another promising sign is the emergence of community organizations from within the refugee communities. Three organizations, the Somali Bantu Community Association of Pittsburgh (SBCAP), the Bhutanese Community Association of Pittsburgh (BCAP), and the Union of African Communities in Southwestern Pennsylvania (UAC), have been founded to provide citizenship courses,

community outreach, language instruction, and other needed services to their respective communities.

This expansion was obviously not without growing pains, however. PPS's regional sites were only established after complaints about the educational opportunities being provided to the Somali Bantu were brought by the Education Law Center of Pennsylvania, invoking Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (see sections 2.6.16.3 and 4.5.3) and the Equal Education Opportunity Act to bolster their claims. Additionally, BCAP arose out of discussions prompted by the suicide of a member of the Bhutanese community in early 2010, 29 days after his arrival in the United States. Govinda (NB) and Lindsey (SHIM: FSC) both noted a period when support for Catholic Charities' (CC) clients was insufficient. Govinda said that during his initial resettlement period there seemed to be uneven levels support throughout the community, saying: "I don't think everybody had access to *all* these different types of [cultural orientation] services ... it all depending [*sic*] on the particular personality of the caseworker. Some caseworkers just simply ignored it, and some caseworkers they did it nicely." He said it seemed as though less assistance was provided if it appeared that a family would be able to adapt on their own, even if they were entitled to the support. Both Govinda and Lindsey attribute this poor provision of services to CC's overall size and to being overwhelmed with cases. Possibly in reaction to these issues, Diana and Bethany noted that CC did not renew the refugee social service grants it had previously been receiving. The organization is now focusing solely on the R&P period and has significantly decreased the number of refugees it is resettling. Fortunately, Govinda noted that whatever was creating the issues when he initially arrived in 2008 seems to have been addressed in the time since.

Despite these gains, language-support remains limited. There are only two major institutions providing large-scale language-instruction to the refugee population in Pittsburgh, neither of which receives *any* federal funding through ORR or PRM. This is disheartening, if not entirely surprising given USRAP's emphasis on employment as a pathway towards integration over language proficiency. It is also difficult for resettled populations to make use of what services are available. Based on this ethnography, the best way to facilitate refugee language learning is by reducing the barriers to entry. It is not that refugees do not want to attend courses, but rather that they have limited transportation resources and do not have a lot of energy to dedicate towards language-learning in light of their economic worries.

Reducing barriers to entry is easier said than done. It will always be more efficient for an organization to maintain a centralized location, yet more favorable to the learner if the language-services are located where they live. There has been movement within the community to address this conflict. GPLC has worked to expand their reach by placing their Family Literacy Sites in accessible locations (in Whitehall Place where many refugees live and downtown in a centralized location) and providing travelling tutors, and BCAP has established volunteer-taught language-courses in three separate locations. Language-providers can only do so much, however, without sufficient funding to provide trained, professionally supported instructors to lead these courses.

5.1.1 Limitations of the present study

A number of limitations with the present inquiry prevent us from making any conclusive statements about language support in Pittsburgh. Only two refugees were interviewed, both of whom are male and had some level of English upon arrival in the United States. Consequently, neither of them made use of the language-resources available in Pittsburgh for very long.

Additionally, they were both resettled by the same agency (Catholic Charities). Any criticisms they had about the refugee services in Pittsburgh were therefore largely limited to this institution. One must also acknowledge that whatever criticisms they might have of the services provided may be muted by an overall sense of indebtedness created by their relationship.

The scope of the present ethnography also might have been too broad. At the onset, we were unaware of how little English-instruction was provided by resettlement agencies. The institutions surveyed provided a good sense of the overall scope of the support refugees receive, but provided a regrettably limited view of *language-learning* resources available. Had it been known that only two agencies provided the majority of the refugee language-instruction in the city, more effort would have been made to contact a variety of individuals *within* GPLC and the AIU rather than across the spectrum of local support agencies. In the end, however, the fact that these two agencies are the primary providers of language instruction in the city might be the most telling revelation of this investigation.

5.2 EMERGENT THEMES

It is clear that refugee policy and language learning as a significant impact on refugees' lives, shaping their economic, educational, and integration opportunities. The primary research question of this thesis is "How does the United States Refugee Admissions Process impact refugees' language learning?" The short answer is that it impacts their learning quite a bit, but not in a positive way. In U.S. refugee policy we see many of the paradoxes of the American ideology made manifest. USRAP's support services have historically been "justified on the grounds that the admission of refugees to the United States is a decision of the federal government, entailing

some federal responsibility” (Bruno, 2011, 8). However, it seems that this responsibility only obligates the government to do so much. While the admissions program may accept the tired, poor, homeless, and tempest-tossed “huddled masses” of the world onto its shores, the support they receive once they arrive is more concerned with getting them off of government assistance than providing them with the resources to comfortably adapt to their new home.

Over the course of the present investigation, three major themes have emerged that can help us better understand U.S. refugee policy. First of all, U.S. refugee policy is rooted in U.S. foreign policy. Secondly, there is limited support for language-learning programs within the United States Refugee Admissions Program (USRAP) largely due to its focus on self-sufficiency through employment. And finally, political power appears to play a significant role in shaping policy decisions. There are a variety of consequences for the refugee population of Pittsburgh that stem from these three underlying themes.

5.2.1 Refugee policy rooted in foreign policy

The development of U.S. refugee policy was a reactive process rooted in its foreign policy. This can be seen in the structure of USRAP and in the support services provided by the program. As explored in section 2.6, the modern form of USRAP was established in 1980 with the passage of the Refugee Act but has its roots in the aftermath of World War II. U.S. refugee policy evolved over the intervening decades through a series of legislative actions in direct response to specific crises. These crises were often related to, if not directly caused by, U.S. foreign policy. As such, providing a safe haven for refugees fleeing from conflict and persecution was the primary goal of the program. The domestic support programs grew out of the resultant influx of people and existed principally so that the newly arriving populations did not

unduly burden existing public benefit programs. Resettlement was the first priority; domestic support came afterwards.

The division of authority, and subsequent differing policy orientations, within the two primary wings of USRAP is another example of the conflict between the foreign and domestic sides of U.S. refugee resettlement. As explored in section 3.5.1, the overseas side of the equation is handled by the Department of State through the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration while the domestic programs are administered by the Department of Health and Human Services through the Office of Refugee Resettlement. As Leah (JFCS) told me: “The ability to learn English isn't important in resettlement. It's about saving lives.” Therefore, resettlement does not take into account a refugee’s potential for integration nor does it consider whether they have previous experiences with the English language.

As a consequence of this reactive, divided development process, the domestic side of resettlement has constantly been playing catch-up with the foreign affairs side. Each new humanitarian emergency has brought in refugees from different areas of the globe confronted with a new range of challenges. In the present day, although USRAP has matured and is no longer incrementally springing into existence on a crisis-to-crisis basis, the system is still primarily reactive as it revises its resettlement priority targets annually based on developments abroad. As a result of these foundational influences, it is incredibly difficult for the domestic programs to provide uniform services nationwide in a manner that adequately and consistently addresses the incoming refugee populations’ individual difficulties. The relatively restricted support programs that result from these incongruent priorities force USRAP to focus on encouraging refugees’ independence from government assistance, which results in a whole host of problems.

5.2.2 Limited Support for language programs within USRAP

As a result of the limited support provided domestically, the focus of ORR-funded programs is self-sufficiency through employment, often at the expense of properly addressing refugees' language needs. Once the support provided in the first 30 – 60 days runs out, refugees move onto the general public benefits programs. These programs are not cognizant of the refugees' needs. The general welfare programs, as Govinda (NB) told me, are frequently at odds with language learning. He explained: “the Department of Public Welfare, its main emphasis is on finding a job, rather than on language. So they say that we have to learn the language, okay, but they focus more on finding a job.” The need for employment is intense, and Leah (JFCS) said that at the agency they are obligated to focus on finding employable refugees a job within “about a month” because “someone has to go to work” in order to pay the bills. Unfortunately, this interrupts their language learning. It was repeatedly reported that once employment starts, attendance at language classes stops. Fuad (SB) laid out the dilemma thusly: after work “you're already tired, you're not ready to learn [or] to concentrate” and it comes down to a choice: “are you going to work or are you going to school?” With their limited language or vocational skills, refugees are most often able to find difficult, second or third shift jobs that make it especially challenging to attend to much outside of the fundamentals of life. The resultant need to stay employed inhibits their ability to improve their language proficiency, creating a vicious cycle whereby their inadequate exposure to formal instruction restricts their future job opportunities and potential to move beyond entry-level, minimum wage employment, and this very employment limits their ability to continue learning.

One reason there are limited language-learning opportunities is because within USRAP language learning exists primarily as a means to facilitate employment. As mentioned in section

3.3, ORR-funded programs are obliged to “make available sufficient resources for employment training and placement in order to achieve economic self-sufficiency among refugees as quickly as possible [and] provide refugees with the opportunity to acquire sufficient English language training to enable them to become effectively resettled as quickly as possible.” Data presented in the ORR's Report to Congress in FY 2008 admits that “refugees are facing difficulties attaining self-sufficiency following arrival in the United States” (Office of Refugee Resettlement, 2011, p. 95) and the literature has repeatedly identified limited language proficiency as a significant factor in this struggle (see section 3.5). However, it is difficult to gauge exactly how much money the United States devotes towards refugee language-learning in total. In the budgets presented in ORR's annual reports, support for language instruction is included within a number of different, non-itemized funding streams and there is no single category devoted solely to supporting language-programs.¹⁷ Therefore, it is hard to judge USRAP's priorities in a strictly quantitative sense. Historically, few of the examples of refugee legislation reviewed in section 2.6 were overly concerned with promoting language acquisition beyond its ability to facilitate employment. While the United States may admit the greatest number of refugees, its explicit support for English-acquisition is relatively minimal when compared with other nations' resettlement programs (see section 3.6). In their interviews, both Fuad (SB) and Govinda (NB) made wistful mention of what they had heard about Canada's more generous language and welfare resources.

Whatever the funding situation on a national level, on the local level there is not much money going towards language learning. Most pure language learning resources in Pittsburgh are funded by sources outside of USRAP. The major literacy service providers in Pittsburgh receive

¹⁷ See Appendix D.

no funding from the resettlement system. Only the local resettlement agencies, Catholic Charities (CC), Jewish Family and Children's Service (JFCS), and the Northern Area Multi-Service Center (NAMS) receive funding from the Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (PRM) or the Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR). This money goes towards crucial initial needs such as rent and food assistance, cultural orientation courses, employability services, and case management to ensure that refugees are adapting to their new homes and connecting to the services they need. The major literacy service providers, the Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council (GPLC), the Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU), and area schools receive from other sources. GPLC and AIU receiving funding from a variety of sources including private donors, endowments, foundations and grants from the Department of Education and the Department of Labor. Pittsburgh Public Schools receives funding for its ESL programming from Title III of the No Child Left Behind Act.

Because of the limited funding available, the need for language-learning programs exists, but the programming does not. As a result, a number of different informal sources of language instruction have emerged. JFCS has trained volunteers visit with their clients not only to provide assistance with everyday acculturation issues around the house, but also to provide an opportunity to practice English. Nasser (NAMS) mentioned a church in the southern borough of Bellvue that does informal ESL teaching, and Govinda stated that the Bhutanese community association is conducting courses to supplement GPLC's classes. While such opportunities are beneficial, they are no substitute for more formal, structured language-learning courses.

5.2.3 Political power as structuring influence

The final theme that emerged through this research is the role that political power plays in shaping refugee policy. It has been widely recognized that limited language support for refugees is problematic, but little has been done to address this issue. Except for the reduction of financial support provided, USRAP has seen little change since its inception in 1980. When USRAP was initially established, cash and medical assistance were available for up to 36 months. In the current system, refugees can only receive such assistance for up to 8 months (Bruno, 2011). Additionally, the majority of the institutions that support refugees in Pittsburgh are actually intended to serve the native population. The Greater Pittsburgh Literacy Council, the Allegheny Intermediate Unit, No Child Left Behind funding, and the South Hills Interfaith Ministries Family Support Center exist principally to support American citizens and only end up providing services to refugees through happenstance. However, even when they are able to access these organizations' services, it is not always without difficulty. Though entitled to language-support within the schools, refugees in the Lawrenceville neighborhood of Pittsburgh were only able to compel the schools to make good on such assistance by bringing a legal complaint (see section 5.1). And although they are entitled to interpretation services when interacting with federally assisted programs, such as medical service providers, *vis-à-vis* the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 13166, area refugees still run into hurdles utilizing such resources.

One possible explanation for the lack of reform, the limited number of programs fully attuned to refugees' needs, and the difficulties they face claiming use of the resources to which they are entitled is that the refugees lack sufficient political clout within American electoral politics. The aforementioned programs and legislation serving American citizens were

established as a result of previous generations utilizing their political capital (i.e., voting power) to induce legislators to create such programs. As refugees do not constitute a significant percentage of the electorate, perhaps institutional reform does not arise because they do not possess enough of a political voice to force it into existence. One interesting counterpoint to this argument is the proposed Strengthening Refugee Resettlement Act (see section 3.5.4). This is interesting because the author, Keith Ellison, is a Representative from Minnesota. His congressional district includes the city of Minneapolis, a city that has a large population of Somali refugees (Grady, 2009), suggesting that the aforementioned hypothesis carries some weight.

5.2.4 Potential areas for reform

Without reform of the resettlement system, refugees will remain a largely disenfranchised section of the population, surviving rather than thriving in their new homes. There are a number of ways, however, that the difficulties highlighted in this thesis might be alleviated. In Pittsburgh, one of the major obstacles to language learning stems from limited transportation resources. Previously, this problem was overcome by hosting English classes in housing developments where large numbers of refugees were resettled. Unfortunately, this is no longer a viable solution as current resettlement is scattered all around the city. One possible way to address this is by having more transient, traveling tutors who can go to where the refugees are living. Keep it Real has seen success with this model to provide afterschool tutoring. Another possible solution is for businesses that employ many refugees to sponsor English courses on-site, enabling refugees to attend classes immediately preceding or following the workday. Leah (JFCS) noted that this was done in the past at several locations, but the practice has faded with

the recent economic downturn. Though the issue of access to technology may limit its reach, distance learning might be another way to bring the language courses to the refugees. This could be implemented through a web site or software package. If online, it could even incorporate two-way instructor feedback. Nationwide at a policy level, increasing the amount of support refugees receive in the first year would be one way to extend refugees' "lead-in" time. This would provide them with more time to improve their English proficiency and adapt to the United States before being compelled to join the workforce. Directing more USRAP funding towards language-learning programs, through a line item in the ORR budget or otherwise would also be a step in the right direction.

5.2.5 Future research

There are a number of ways that the current investigation could be expanded upon. For one, it would be worthwhile to continue the present exploration to discover if refugee-language support is provided in any substantial way from "backdoor" sources, that is to say organizations not focused solely on the refugee population. It may be the case that the majority of refugee language-support comes not from USRAP, but from sources such as the Department of Education. Additionally, a more focused study on the services provided by the two major language providers (GPLC and AIU) would be interesting and could expose how the language resources that do exist help or hinder refugees' language learning in more detail. A final potential avenue of investigation would be to delve into the refugees' lives to discover more extensively how all of the various service providers in Pittsburgh shape their opportunities.

APPENDIX A

ACRONYMS USED

DOS: Department of State

ELL: English Language Learner

TESOL: Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages

FY: Fiscal Year

DHS: Department of Homeland Security

DHHS: Department of Health and Human Services

INA: Immigration and Nationality Act

IOM: International Organization for Migration

NGO: Non-governmental organization

LEP: Limited English Proficient

NCLB: No Child Left Behind

ORR: Office of Refugee Resettlement

PRM: Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration

R&P: Reception and Placement

RSC: Resettlement Support Center

UNHCR: United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

USCIS: United States Citizenship and Immigration Services

USRAP: United States Refugee Admissions Program

Volag: Voluntary Resettlement Agency

APPENDIX B

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: INSTITUTIONAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1: Descriptive details

- What is the overall mission of your organization?
 - What is your organization's mission in regards to refugees?
- How does your program operate? How free are you to make independent decisions to do your job?
- What services do you provide (in general)?
- What services do you provide (in regards to English-language classes / language learning)?

Section 2: Resources

- What are your organization's sources of funding?
- Where do you get your materials?
- Do you utilize any federal resources (funding or materials) in your program?
 - ... any resources from the state government?
 - ... any resources from the local government?
- Do you partner with any other organizations to provide services?

Section 3: Policy intersections

- Are you aware of any federal legislation that impacts your work?
 - How does it facilitate your language-support work?
 - How does it hinder your language-support work?
- Are you aware of any state legislation that impacts your work?
 - How does it facilitate your language-support work?
 - How does it hinder your language-support work?
- Are you aware of any local legislation that impacts your work?
 - How does it facilitate your language-support work?
 - How does it hinder your language-support work?

Section 4: Problems & challenges

- What are the biggest challenges *you* face in providing services?
- What are the biggest challenges the refugee language-learners face in learning English?
- What challenges do refugee language learners have...
 - With the language material itself?

- Adapting to the learning environment?

Section 5: Successes

- What programs or projects work well?
- Where have you seen your greatest successes?

Section 6: Refugee populations

- What refugee populations do you serve / interact with?
- How do they utilize your services?
- How much education do your learners have when they come to you?
- Generally, what are their goals?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL: LEARNER QUESTIONNAIRE

Section 1: Descriptive details

- What country are you from originally?
Where did you live just before coming to the United States?
- How much education did you have when you first moved to the camps?
... when you first came to the United States?
- What was your education like before the refugee camps?
.... in the refugee camps?
- What organizations or programs do you frequently interact with to help you live or adjust to the United States (in general)?
- What organizations or programs do you frequently interact with in regards to English-language classes / language learning?
- Have the kind of organizations and programs you have interacted with changed since you originally resettled?
- Generally, what are your goals for learning English?

Section 2: Resources

- Do you get any money from the government to help you live?
- What kind of materials do you use to learn English?
- In regards to language learning, do you get any money or other help from federal sources (from the national government)?
 - ... from state government?
 - ... from the local government?

Section 3: Policy intersections

- Do you know of any way that federal legislation impacts your language learning?
 - How does it help you?
 - How does it cause problems?
- Do you know of any way that state legislation impacts your language learning?
 - How does it help you?
 - How does it cause problems?
- Do you know of any way that local legislation impacts your language learning?
 - How does it help you?
 - How does it cause problems?

Section 4: Problems & challenges

- What are the biggest challenges you face using language-learning services? (For example: getting to class on time, going every day, transportation)
- What are the biggest challenges you face learning English?
- What challenges do you have...
 - With the language material itself?
 - Adapting to the learning environment? (For example: the classroom, the homework)

Section 5: Successes

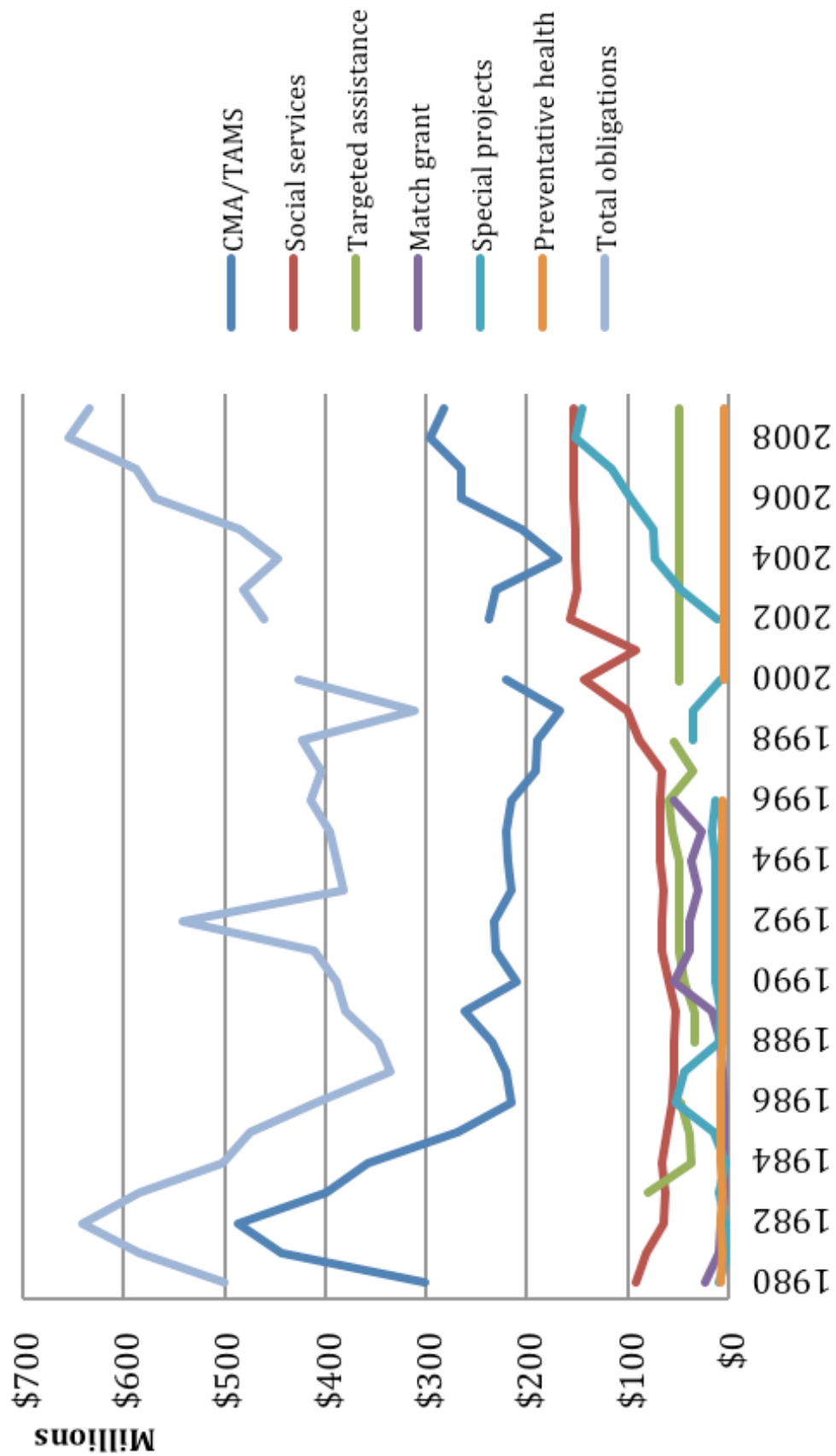
- What has helped you learn English the most?
- Where have you seen your greatest successes in learning English?

APPENDIX D

Table 7. ORR budget appropriations, FY 1980 - 2009

	CMA/TAMS	Social services	Targeted assistance	Match grant	Special projects	Preventative health	Total obligations
1980	\$300,614,000	\$92,511,000	-	\$23,588,000	\$8,208,000	\$8,089,000	\$499,534,000
1981	\$444,132,000	\$82,469,000	-	\$9,500,000	\$1,093,000	\$6,539,000	\$585,064,000
1982	\$487,133,000	\$64,620,000	-	\$7,625,000	\$2,919,000	\$6,985,000	\$640,539,000
1983	\$398,740,000	\$62,839,000	\$81,122,000	\$3,827,000	\$8,430,000	\$6,031,000	\$583,668,000
1984	\$357,127,000	\$66,972,000	\$37,530,000	\$4,000,000	\$2,213,000	\$8,400,000	\$501,933,000
1985	\$267,556,000	\$61,645,000	\$39,026,000	\$4,000,000	\$14,098,000	\$8,399,000	\$475,082,000
1986	\$215,633,000	\$56,392,000	\$47,850,000	\$3,805,000	\$52,469,000	\$7,968,000	\$408,587,000
1987	\$219,992,000	\$55,478,000	-	\$5,828,000	\$43,357,000	\$8,039,000	\$335,554,000
1988	\$233,274,000	\$54,498,000	\$34,466,000	\$7,659,000	\$8,602,000	\$5,840,000	\$346,809,000
1989	\$261,820,000	\$52,670,000	\$34,052,000	\$15,808,000	\$7,876,000	\$5,770,000	\$380,481,000
1990	\$210,000,000	\$60,000,000	\$43,898,000	\$54,936,000	\$12,012,000	\$5,770,000	\$389,601,000
1991	\$230,724,000	\$66,811,000	\$48,808,000	\$39,035,000	\$12,457,000	\$5,631,000	\$410,440,000
1992	\$232,477,000	\$67,009,000	\$48,796,000	\$39,036,000	\$12,476,000	\$5,631,000	\$541,063,000
1993	\$214,390,000	\$65,152,000	\$49,397,000	\$30,215,000	\$11,905,000	\$5,741,000	\$381,481,000
1994	\$218,064,000	\$68,071,000	\$49,397,000	\$36,266,000	\$12,120,000	\$5,300,000	\$389,218,000
1995	\$219,465,000	\$67,890,000	\$55,397,000	\$27,344,000	\$16,141,000	\$5,300,000	\$396,235,000
1996	\$214,614,000	\$67,745,000	\$60,400,000	\$54,745,000	\$12,100,000	\$5,077,000	\$414,681,000
1997	\$191,574,159	\$67,486,855	\$35,371,300	-	-	-	\$404,400,000
1998	\$189,000,000	\$89,100,000	\$54,400,000	-	\$35,371,300	-	\$423,300,000
1999	\$167,189,870	\$101,277,427	-	-	\$35,371,300	-	\$311,863,880
2000	\$220,653,237	\$143,929,722	\$49,468,998	-	\$7,263,825	\$4,834,218	\$426,150,000
2001	-	\$92,400,000	\$49,500,000	-	-	\$4,800,000	-
2002	\$237,243,000	\$158,600,000	\$49,477,000	-	\$10,000,000	\$4,835,000	\$460,155,000
2003	\$229,788,000	\$150,139,000	\$49,155,000	-	\$47,017,000	\$4,804,000	\$480,903,000
2004	\$168,975,000	\$152,218,000	\$49,025,000	-	\$72,588,000	\$4,792,000	\$447,598,000
2005	\$204,993,000	\$152,243,000	\$49,081,000	-	\$73,601,000	\$4,796,000	\$484,714,000
2006	\$265,364,000	\$153,899,000	\$48,557,000	-	\$96,867,000	\$4,745,000	\$569,432,000
2007	\$265,546,000	\$154,005,000	\$48,590,000	-	\$114,958,000	\$4,748,000	\$587,847,000
2008	\$296,057,000	\$154,005,000	\$48,590,000	-	\$152,231,000	\$4,748,000	\$655,631,000
2009	\$282,348,000	\$154,005,000	\$48,590,000	-	\$143,751,000	\$4,748,000	\$633,442,000

Figure 6. ORR budget appropriations, FY 1980 - 2009



Discussion

It is difficult to determine exactly how much money ORR provides to support language learning due to the lack of detailed itemization in the publically available budgets. Additionally, language-learning programs may be funded by a variety of different funding streams. They are funded primarily through the social service allocation, but this funding stream includes services not restricted to language learning and is itself divided into both formula and discretionary (competitive) grant programs. Targeted assistance may support language learning and is again divided into formula and discretionary funding streams. Furthermore, “special” programs may fund language-learning programs but vary from year to year, given their non-standard nature.

Additionally, the preceding table and graph are necessarily approximations of the full budgets presented in the ORR annual reports due to the diverse nature of the projects funded by ORR, and categorization and programmatic changes that have occurred over time. Some transitory budget items, such as the line item for ORR Administrative costs that appeared from 1980-1986, are excluded. “Special projects” include the funds for programs for Unaccompanied Alien Children, Victims of Torture, Victims of Trafficking, and Mutual Aid Associations, among others that vary from year to year. Social service discretionary funds have also been included within the special projects numbers. Targeted assistance includes both formula and discretionary grants. In 1996 the match grant program and the Wilson-Fish program funding were combined in the table. It is unknown why match grant funding no longer constitutes its own allocation after 1996 as a result of an inability to check the data. A website redesign occurred between the initial data collection and the creation of the final summarized table/graph and the reports for the years 1997 – 2005 are no longer available on the ORR’s web site for verification. Other gaps appear where there is no budget allocation listed for the given category in the corresponding year’s annual report. CMA stands for Cash, Medical, and Administrative grants. TAMS stands for Transitional and Medical Services.

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